

WILLIAM JOHNSTON.

dup in 12a

THE  
PIONEERS OF BLANSHARD

A SKETCH OF THE  
TOWNSHIP

BY  
WILLIAM M. JOHNSTON

W. H. BRIGGS



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# PIONEERS OF BLANSHARD

WITH

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE  
TOWNSHIP

BY

WILLIAM JOHNSTON

TORONTO:

WILLIAM BRIGGS

1899



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## PREFACE.

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I DEEM it quite unnecessary to offer any apology for the publication of this work. The rapid formation of historical societies, both county and township, in so many different sections of our Province, indicates that the public mind is at last thoroughly awakened to the necessity of collecting and preserving in some more permanent and abiding form than the evanescent columns of the weekly newspaper or the scarcely less ephemeral magazine, these fast disappearing records of our old pioneer life, with their humble story of trials and triumphs, ere the destructive hand of time has obliterated them forever.

The interest and attention which our early local history is exciting on almost every hand is certainly as much to be lauded as the past neglect of it was to be condemned, and is truly only a suitable recognition on our part of the immense debt of gratitude which the generation of the present owes to the old pioneer past. To the courage, hardihood, and brave-heartedness of these old backwoods settlers of the early days we certainly owe it that our country is what it is; and amid all the luxury, refinement, and progress of the

wonderful to-day we must ever remember that the humble past has been the parent of the present, as the present will be the parent of the future.

I confess, with something akin to pride, the gratification it has been to me to know that the present book may be considered one of the pioneer works of its class. I feel, too, that it is a matter of considerable importance that every child of the township should have some knowledge of its early history and settlement. I have deemed it, therefore, no idle ambition to have attempted the task of rescuing that history, as well as the names of many of the first settlers, from that oblivion with which time in a few short years would inevitably overtake them. In my own humble way I have striven to give both the history of Blanshard and the biography of its first settlers as much of permanence and publicity as is to be secured in a work of this kind.

The lives and hardships, the joys and sorrows of those humble heroes and heroines of the backwoods have always to me had a charm and an interest which I have striven, however feebly, to impart to these pages. If to the reader they give one-half the pleasure in reading them which they have given me in writing them I will be amply rewarded.

The old pioneer life, in this section of the province at least, has for many years been a thing of the past. Only a very few of that fast diminishing band of grey-haired veterans who can remember the old days in the backwoods are now left in our midst. To touch some slumbering but still responsive chord of memory which would waken the hearts of these, and at the same time to stir up some sympathetic interest in the minds of the present generation in a life of which they know prac-

tically nothing has been my constant and I hope not unworthy aim. Although the historical sketch of a township, and the biographical notices of some of its first settlers as well, must necessarily, from their very nature, to be of merely local interest, yet I have been ambitious enough to imagine that this work might reach and perhaps interest a much wider circle of readers.

For the accomplishing of this object I have strewn through these pages descriptive passages, illustrative of those phases of backwoods life which were common to it, not only in my own neighborhood, but in every part of the province. The log house and the backwoods shanty, like the ox team and the sled, the logging bee and the country spree, were inseparable from pioneer life everywhere. Inseparable from it, too, were those hardships and privations which seem almost incredible to the generation of to-day, and which give a lustre and a tinge of heroism to the lives of the men and women of that period not easily to be forgotten. A backwoodsman myself, and one who has spent many of the best and perhaps the happiest of his days in the bush, I can claim that intimate acquaintance with pioneer life which only actual experience can give. I have drawn the sketches which I have described from the life. If I have in the pages of this book in any way failed in the adequate representation of them, I have failed not from lack of will but from lack of ability.

WILLIAM JOHNSTON,

*River Road, Blanshard.*

ST. MARYS, *August 24th, 1899.*





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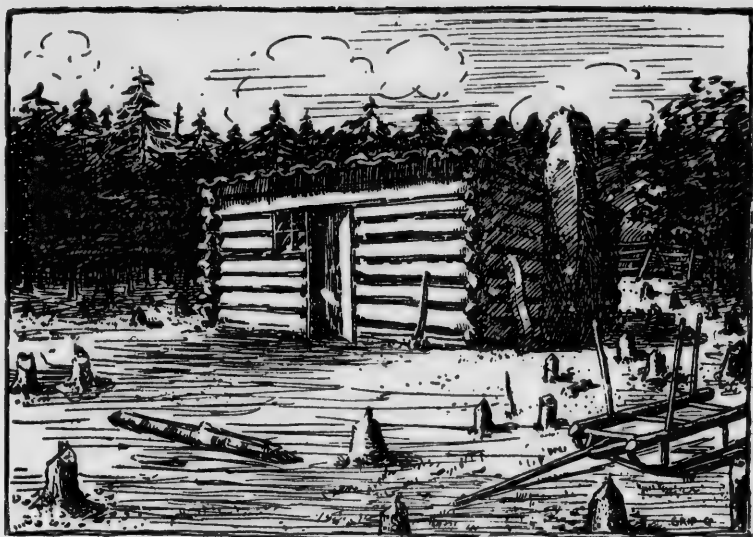
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### THE OLD LOG HOUSE.

O auld hoose ! O auld hoose !  
 Deserted tho' ye be,  
 There ne'er will be a new hoose  
 Ae half sae dear tae me.

—*Scottish Song.*

**R**ICKETY, shingleless, old and gray,  
 Scathed by the storms of many a day,  
 In a wayside spot where the wild weeds grow,  
 Stands the old log cabin of long ago.

Loftily, haughtily round it stand  
 Lordly mansions on every hand,  
 Deigning never a look to cast  
 On the ruined roof of the humble past.

Rarely a foot o'er its threshold falls,  
 Rarely a look at its old gray walls  
 By a friend or a stranger is cast, I trow—  
 Nobody cares for the old house now.



Rotting away is its rough, rude wall,  
Tottering and tumbling and like to fall ;  
And the rafters round, which its roof uprears,  
Are bent by the burden of fourscore years.

The winter wind and the summer sun  
On roof and gable their work have done ;  
And crumbled down, since many a day,  
The quaint old chimney of "clat and clay."

On every side, within and without,  
The chinking and plaster are falling out,  
And the sagging sash with its broken pane  
Is a fence no more 'gainst the wind and rain.

In and out through its drooping door  
The feet of the fathers will fall no more,  
As back and forth on their weary way  
They went to their work with the waking day.

Through that mouldering doorway I entered in,  
And I stood by the spot where the hearth had been ;  
Where the backlog fire with its ruddy light  
Had burned and blazed through the livelong night.

But the fires were out and the lug-pole gone,  
All cracked and crumbling the old hearthstone,  
And fallen the jambs by the fireplace wall,  
Where the weird night shadows had loved to fall.

Silent I stood on the rotting floor,  
While I looked the old house o'er and o'er,  
And my eyes with the burning tears filled fast  
As my heart went back to the vanished past.

Oh ! many a year has the grass grown green,  
And many a winter's snows have been,  
Since, a barefoot boy, I used to roam,  
And that old house was my childhood's home !

## THE OLD LOG HOUSE.

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No sky so bright as its sky o'erhead,  
No couch so soft as its humble bed,  
No face so fair to my childish sight  
As her's whose kiss was my last good-night.

Again 'mid the bygone years I seem,  
And the past comes back like a waking dream,  
Till the ruined walls no more I see,  
But the old house stands as it used to be.

Once more by the hearth of my early days  
All the home faces are met by the blaze,  
And loving eyes look bright as when  
In my childhood's years I saw them then.

But the years roll by and the faces fade,  
And one by one in the dust are laid,  
Till the last from the empty hearth has gone,  
And I stand 'neath its ruined roof—alone.

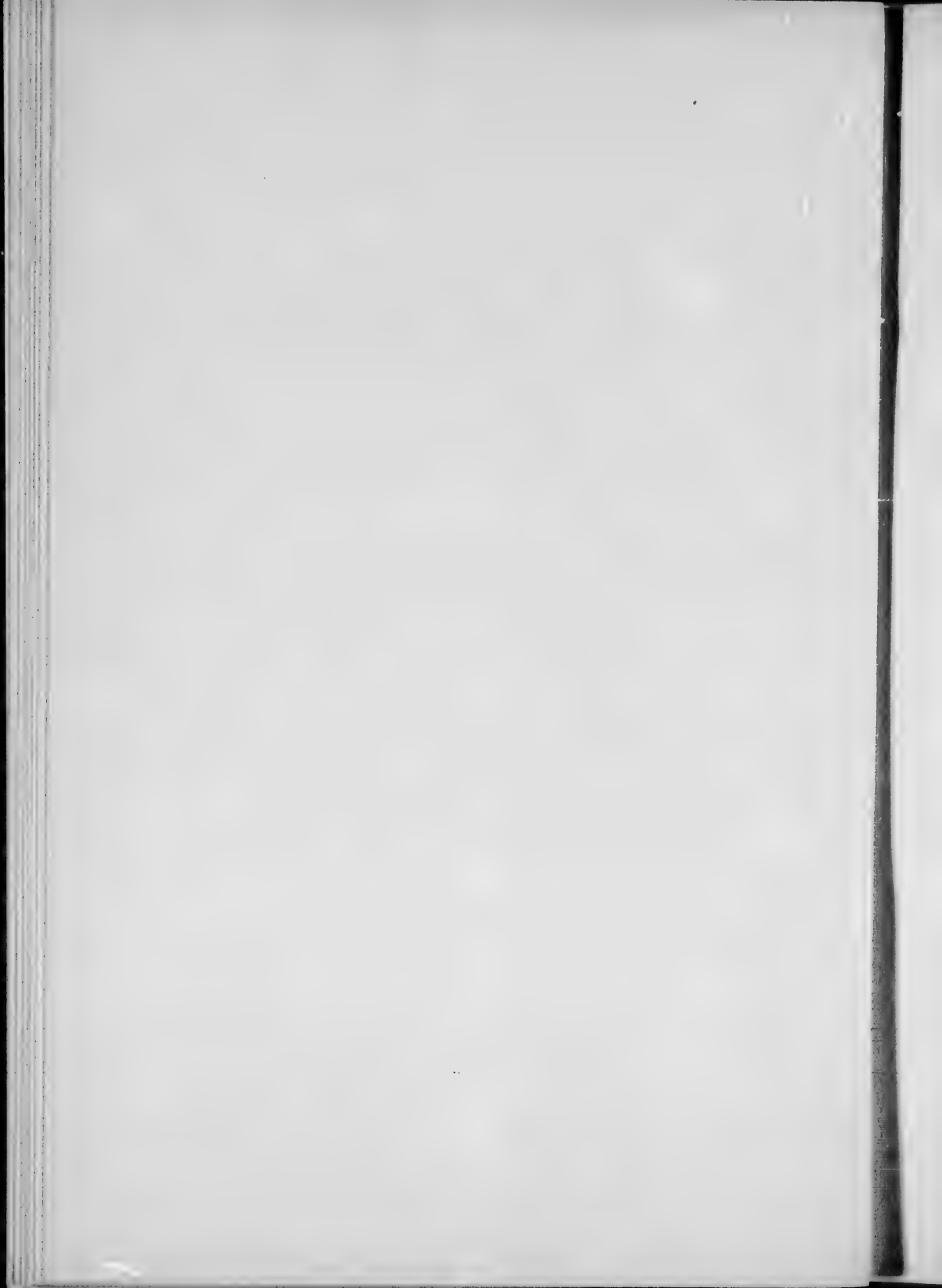
Alas for the wreck of the robber years !  
Alas for our unavailing tears  
O'er the withered leaves of the past, that lie  
Strewn thick on the pathway of memory !

Like a dream we come, like a dream we go  
'Mid the ceaseless years, in their ebb and flow :  
And the crumbling things of the sad to-day  
Were the idols we worshipped yesterday.

Yet, mouldering away though its walls, to me  
Forever green will the memory be  
Of the dear old house that I used to know  
Where I lived and loved in the Long Ago.

THOMAS SPARKS, M.D.

*St. Marys, Ont.*



# THE PIONEERS OF BLANSHARD.

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## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY SETTLEMENT.

**I**N the latter part of October, in the year 1839—sixty years ago—Mr. McDonald, Provincial Land Surveyor, returned from the west to the Canada Company's office in Toronto, with the plans and field notes of the township of Blanshard. He had been engaged during the summer in making the survey of what, by common consent of all who are acquainted with that section of Canada, is considered as being amongst the best, if not the very best, of all the municipalities ceded to the Company by King George. The Canada Company was organized in the year 1824 by a number of English gentlemen, with its headquarters in London, England, and was incorporated by an Act of the British Parliament in 1826. John Galt, the Ayrshire novelist, was one of the great promoters of the enterprise, and he, with Dr. Dunlop and others, was sent to Upper Canada for the purpose of carrying out the schemes and intentions of the Company regarding the great estate recently ceded to it by the Crown. It

may be proper to state here, however, that the settlement of the Huron tract formed no part of the great enterprise which the Company had in view; neither did it relate in any way to the agreement made in the charter recently granted to it by the Government of Great Britain. Since the vast territory known as British North America had been acquired by the British people it had been the policy of that Government to maintain the union of Church and State as then existing in England. For the furtherance of their policy, and the better to render the Church in a greater degree independent of the fast growing democratic element, which was strongly pervading the minds of the masses of that particular period, large grants of public lands had been made to it by the Government. Those land grants were known as Clergy Reserves, and were located in several sections of the Province where surveys had been made. The Canada Company was organized to dispose of these lands and open them for settlement. Matters had proceeded so far amicably between all parties when a complete change of policy was effected. Without reverting to what may be called that unhappy period of Canadian history, which culminated in the rebellion of 1837, we may say that a new power had arisen in Canadian politics. This power was represented and ably manipulated by a Scotchman who was then at the head of the Anglican Church in Canada. He protested against the arrangements made with the Canada Company. Those lands which had been set apart and granted to the Church for her support ought to be controlled and disposed of by the Church. Of the granting of these lands to this body there could be no doubt; and such



being the case, there could be as little doubt that the Church should control them. Through the influence of the Church, therefore, the operations of the Canada Company were abruptly terminated.

At the period of which we write, the whole territory of the Huron tract was comparatively unknown. Unless some adventurous hunter, no white man had ever ventured into the darkness of that unexplored region. Its vast solitudes were a mystery. The story of the white man's life among its leafy halls was untold. This great section of country the Canada Company was asked to accept in lieu of the Clergy Reserves, which, as matters now stood, the Government appeared to be determined to resume for the purpose for which they were originally designed.

To this arrangement the Company was unwilling to accede. The agreement regarding the Clergy Reserves was ratified by those concerned, and should not now be violated. A bargain which had been consummated on fair and honorable lines ought to be held sacred by both the contracting parties. But apart from this, the Huron tract was unknown. Fertile it might be, or barren it might be—that was a matter futurity only could determine. The burden of the chance should not therefore fall on the shoulders of the Company. As far as their agents had entered the territory from the east, it was not encouraging. Dismal marshes seemed to prevail. Around where the city of Stratford now stands, and stretching away to the north through Elma and Ellice, the country appeared to be one great swamp. It was hopeless to think that such land could ever be made available for agriculture. The Company therefore declined to make any exchange,

until matters reached a climax. They then made a virtue of necessity, and, much against their inclination, became the proprietors of the Huron tract.

Mr. Galé and other of his associates located themselves at Guelph, which was then a place of a few houses. From this point they directed the operations of the great institution they represented. They made surveys, opened roads, and made such other improvements as would tend to the early settlement of the territory so recently acquired from the Crown. The whole district of the Huron tract was then, and for many years after, known as Huron County. Beginning in the east, adjoining the County of Waterloo, the road known as the Huron road was opened through what is now the city of Stratford, extending in a straight line westward to Lake Huron, where is now the town of Goderich. Surveys were at once proceeded with along both sides of this road, from the Easthopes in the east to the lake in the west. The manner of making these surveys was certainly indicative of a strong want of confidence on the part of the Company, in the early settlement of its large estate. On both sides of this great road, which passes through, in its entire length, one of the most fertile districts in Canada, the townships were surveyed one concession at a time. Thus, after the first concession had been settled another one to the rear was surveyed and thrown open; and so on backwards from what was called the front.

As each of those townships was surveyed it was named after, and in honor of, one of the gentlemen who composed the Board of Directors of the Company. For example, we find such names amongst those representatives as Robert Downie, Esq., John

Fullarton, Esq., John Biddulph, Esq., Henry Osborne, Esq., Richard Blanshard, Esq., and so on; and we have accordingly the municipalities of Biddulph, Fullarton, Downie, Osborne, and Blanshard. The name Blanshard was therefore given to this municipality in honor of Richard Blanshard, Esq. This township was the last to be surveyed in the Huron tract. The long period of fifteen years had elapsed since the organization of the Company before a stake had been planted to mark its boundaries. This arose from its isolated position. The various leading roads opened by the Company were located far away. The Huron road and the Goderich road, from London to Clinton, were each ten or twelve miles distant, rendering this section difficult of access.

During those years, however, from the termination of the war of 1812, and particularly after the close of the Peninsular War, Upper Canada was rapidly taken up for settlement. From Hamilton westward to London, along what is known as the Governor's road, prosperous communities had sprung up. The townships of East and West Nissouri were settled along that great highway, and pioneers were gradually creeping north toward the still wild and unknown township of Blanshard. From the north, settlements were being made every year farther south, down through Fullarton and westward through Downie; and from the Goderich road, land was being rapidly taken up, back to the rear of the township of Osborne. Blanshard was therefore the last township in the south part of the Huron tract to receive within her bounds the hardy and adventurous pioneer. At what time the land hunter (as those looking for a location were called)

first entered into the township it would be impossible to say. Very few of the old pioneers are now left to tell the tale of their first experiences. Nearly all are gone. The few that are still remaining can no longer tell with precision the occurrences of sixty years ago. There are events, however, that have impressed themselves deeply on their minds, a recital of which as to the main facts would be reliable. Still, like all traditions, they are generally equivocal, or contradictory in detail.

From the system adopted by the Company for disposal of their lands, it is quite likely that a number of settlers had located in the township in 1840 and '41, although no record of them could be found in the Company's books. In the early days it was quite proper for a settler to select his lot, build a shanty, and begin to make improvements, without even making application to the Company for permission, or having an agreement as to the price. Some of these squatters, as they were called, lived for twelve years on a farm without ever applying for a right to do so, making improvements, and then selling to someone who might want to purchase, and with the proceeds beginning anew. Nearly all the lands in Blanshard were first taken on lease. A lease was a document granted to the settler by the Company, and extending usually for ten years, whereby the lessee agreed to clear and improve so much land every year (in the old leases four acres), pay all taxes and statute labor and other dues against the land for municipal improvements. The settler also had the option to pay for his lot at from \$2.50 to \$3 per acre, in cash, at the period of his locating, if he was so disposed. If his financial condition would not admit of so large an

outlay, the Company bound themselves at the expiration of the lease and upon the payment of the principal sum, with interest at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum, payable yearly, to issue the patent. Over and above these payments a further sum of about two-and-a-half per cent. was added to the cash price of the land if not paid till the end of the ten years.

It was also agreed between the parties that if the lessee paid for his land at the end of five years, which privilege was granted in the lease, then one and one-quarter per cent. only should be added to the cost price. The Company, we think, acted fairly in stipulating with the settler that all moneys he might be able to save during the term of his lease could be paid over, and interest at the rate of six per cent. per annum, or the same that they charged, would be allowed till the end of the term. These fair and honorable provisions did not, however, serve to mitigate the indignation of the pioneers at the Company asking at the end of ten years an increased price of two and one-half per cent. This item was popularly known amongst the old settlers as the "shaving money." As might be expected, a great amount of misconception arose among the lessees regarding these charges. At every gathering loud and deep were the denunciations of the Company for, as they claimed, their most unfair conduct towards them in these matters. They held that if the land had increased in value, such increase had been brought about by their labor. The Company was therefore enriching itself at the expense of their hardship and toil. This reasoning on their part, while it was largely correct, was not wholly so.

I am not writing a defence of the Canada Company ;



neither do I know whether they carried out their agreement with the British Government as to the obligations expressed in their charter that they should discharge. I do know, however, that many of the settlers in Blanshard could use, and did use, the Company's money, for which they paid six per cent., when money could not be obtained on good security for less than from twelve per cent. to fifteen per cent., and in some cases even higher rates, elsewhere. Many of Blanshard's first settlers lost their farms by borrowing money from capitalists at exorbitant rates of interest to pay for their patents, who could have saved themselves from ruin if they had again renewed their leases for another term. They acted very inconsiderately indeed, and in a way which ended in disaster to themselves. They apparently never considered whether they had discharged their obligations honestly and fairly to the Company, or if the Company had discharged its obligations honestly toward them. The great point was to get clear of the Canada Company, and so end all their troubles. With that idea many rushed to the speculator, and with a madness only equalled by their stupidity, incurred obligations which ate out their substance, ate out their hopes, ate out their lives, and were never discharged till they were discharged by the sheriff under the auctioneer's hammer.

In the early history of the township the pioneers seem to have located themselves along or contiguous to one or other of the streams which form the outlet for nearly the entire drainage of the municipality. Blanshard may be said topographically to be composed of one great plain, passing through which are three

distinct and well-defined valleys. The surface being on the whole comparatively level, it contains but few springs. The first and greatest of these valleys, that of the Thames, enters the township on the north side, flows southerly through the town of St. Marys, passing into Nissouri nearly at the extreme south-east corner of the municipality. The second great valley, that of Fish Creek, enters the township on the west, near the village of Kirkton, flowing southerly till it reaches the rear of the 11th concession, when it trends easterly and parallel to the concession line, and falls into the River Thames a short distance from the south boundary. The third valley, that of Flat Creek, enters the township on the north, flows south-easterly, and falls into the Thames about two miles north of St. Marys. These three streams, with Otter Creek and Trout Creek, which enter the township from the east, form the great outlets for the surplus water on the 45,900 acres of farm lands of which the township is composed.

In early settlements the first and greatest consideration was the water supply. The pioneer, in making his selection of a spot for his future home, kept this constantly in view. No matter what the quality of the soil may have been, without plenty of water it was useless. Along these streams, therefore, the first settlers located themselves. On the 1st concession a number of them cleared up the rear of the lots, and built their shanties on the banks of Flat Creek in order to be convenient to water. Those who located in what is known as the "square township," and at some distance from any stream, had to content themselves with a hole dug in some marshy spot in the

woods. If the pioneer was tasteful and methodical in his habits, he would cut three or four feet from the end of a hollow tree, and placing this in the opening he scooped out, give an appearance of cleanliness to the spot from which he obtained a supply of water for his family. In numerous instances, however, no such precautions were taken, and around many of these watering places was an accumulation of decaying matter to describe which would be a bonanza to the township Board of Health in making their annual report. In too many instances these surface holes in the summer months contained a mixture composed of vegetable matter and of animal life altogether foreign to the component parts of spring water. Frogs were constant visitors. But little difficulty was experienced in dealing with such intruders in the family beverage. They were as a rule big and fat, and the family of the settler paid little attention, therefore, to the great innocent-looking fellows that sat complacently in the mud at the bottom of the hole, in the enjoyment apparently of solid comfort and happiness. But another and greater difficulty was experienced with a smaller and more sportive intruder which existed in the water in millions; this was popularly known as the "wiggler." The approved method of disposing of this part of the mixture was by using a piece of calico, through which the water was strained, thus separating effectively the "wigglers" and the larger portions of clay from the contents of the pail. The fluid thus operated upon was allowed to stand in a vessel for a short time to "settle," when it would be fit for use.

Accordingly we find the first settlements near the

River Thames and on the several creeks that fall into it in its course through the township. On the Thames concession, where the town of St. Marys now stands, we find the earliest traces of settlement in the municipality. North of St. Marys, on Otter Creek, the first pioneer families were those of Mr. McGregor, Mr. McIntosh, John Legg, who resided on the farm now occupied by Mr. Sinclair, south of St. Marys; the families of Messrs. McVannel, Pickard, Weston, Bradley, Hutchings, and Tasker. In 1842 the Armstrong families had settled on the M. R. concession, and were followed soon after in the same concession by Robert Mackay, the Dalzells, Sparlings, Switzers, and nearer St. Marys, Mr. Henderson. On the 1st concession the old settlers, nearly all of whom settled on the rear of their farms on Flat Creek, were the families of Cameron, Meighen, Sinclair, Robertson, and Gowan. Donald Cameron, Ewen Cameron, Mr. McCallum were early settlers near Anderson post-office. On the 4th and 5th concession, John Robinson, Francis Robinson, the Spearin and the Irwin families were among the earliest settlers. On the base line, the Cathcarts, Creightons, Bruces, Jamiesons, Morrills, Marriotts, Richard Paynter, and Mr. Chappel. On the Ninth concession we first meet the families of McIntyres, Sawyers, Willisies, Parkers, McDougalls, Fotheringhams, and Thompsons; on the 10th concession, Thomas Shipley, John Shipley the Dinsmores, Riddleys, and McDonalds; on the 12th-concession, the families of R. and T. Foster, Morley, Duffield, Cook; and near Prospect Hill, Donnin, Radcliff, Crawford; and on the Mitchell Road the Hays had settled at a very early period. In giving the names of these old pioneers we have only men-

tioned some of those who are still living, or whose families still reside on the old farms. Many, very many more indeed, we could mention who resided in Blanshard in those early days, but who have long since gone to other places to search out fortune and a home.

From the year 1841 to the year 1848 the whole township may be said to have been settled. During that period, comparatively little of the land had been patented, or, as the old settlers would say, "deeded." In fact as late as the year 1850 very few titles had been granted to the people of Blanshard.

As we have stated elsewhere, nearly all the old pioneers held their lands for ten years by leasehold tenure, and it was not till the expiration of those tenures that the settler took his patent. During the period, from 1850 to 1860, patents had been issued to the great majority of the settlers in Blanshard. In that time all the leases granted to the several applicants from 1840 to 1850 were lapsing, and had either to be renewed at an increased price per acre or the original price paid and the land patented. A large number adopted the latter course and paid for their farms. At the same time we regret to say that the names of men appear on many of those titles that never underwent the hardships or endured the inconveniences of pioneer life. In the city of London and other places wealth had begun to accumulate in the meantime, and a number of old settlers had recourse to the surplus funds of the capitalist at high rates of interest to deed their farms, and which during their whole life they were never

able to redeem. While this had to be done in many cases, it is gratifying to know that a goodly number made great headway, and whose industry and thrift had been amply rewarded. Very many indeed had been able to discharge all obligations from their own savings, and obtain that much coveted, long-hoped-for, and hard earned piece of parchment on which were written the magic words "the said lands to have and to hold to him and his heirs forever."

In examining the records of the Canada Company, the first patent that we noticed issued in the township of Blanshard to any person was granted William Fletford for lot 15, concession 15. The patent appears to have been issued on November 1st, 1842. This lot, we believe, is at present owned and occupied by Charles Bailey, sen. On concession 1, the first deed was granted to Gordon Meighen, on the 27th day of November, 1844, and three days later another on the same concession was granted to William Beatty. On concession 2, the first deed was issued to Donald Cameron, on September 25th, 1843. On concession 3, to Archie McCallum, on the 7th day of October, 1844. On concession 4, to Adam Shier, on June 18th, 1844. On concession 5 to Gerard Irvine, on September 13th, 1846. On concession 6 to Alexander Jamieson, on October 3rd, 1846. On concession 7 to David Smith, on August 6th, 1846. On concession 8 to Neil McLennan, on June 20th, 1851. On concession 10 to Thomas Dinsmore, on February 26th, 1853. On concession 11 to Samuel Radcliff, on February 26th, 1847. On concession 12 to Peter Weston, on December 27th, 1849. On concession 13 to Thomas Christie, on March 5th, 1844. On concession 14 to Thomas

Skinner, on August 6th, 1853. On concession 18 to Walter Stinson, on May 12th, 1848. On concession 17 to Adam St. John, on July 18th, 1848. On concession 19 to Robert Patterson, on May 12th, 1845. On concession 20 to Caleb Richardson, on September, 1848. On the N. B. concession to Edward Delmage, in 1848. On the S. B. concession to George Jackson, on December 22nd, 1848. On the E. M. R. concession to John Sparling, on June 8th, 1844. On the W. M. R. concession to Donald Cameron, on August 6th, 1845. On the W. B. concession to Jasper Ward, on the 27th day of August, 1852. On the Thames concession to Thomas Ingersoll, on the 19th day of February, 1844. To James Ingersoll, on the 13th day of August, 1849, was issued a patent for an island below the falls in the River Thames, containing one acre and seven perches, and for which he is to pay therefore the sum of five shillings. On the 6th day of August, 1845, a patent was granted to the Reverend Ephraim Evans, of London, for part of lot 22, concession 8, for a place of interment, and on which plot McIntyre's Church now stands. The whole of these patents were issued for lands in the township of Blanshard, in the County of Huron, and Province of Upper Canada.

## CHAPTER II.

## MUNICIPAL NOTES.

FROM the time the first settler, in 1840, built his shanty on the banks of the River Thames, every day brought some new adventurer to the municipality. In 1846 Blanshard must have contained several hundred souls. As the township did not contain a single acre of waste land, the progress of settlement was exceedingly rapid. It was necessary that some sort of local authority should be set in operation for the regulation of the affairs in the new township. We accordingly find that a meeting of the townships of Downie, Fullarton, and Blanshard was held at the school-house in Stratford on January 3rd, 1842. At this meeting certain officers were appointed for the district composed of the townships mentioned. It appears from the minutes, however, as if Blanshard was unrepresented. The first trace of municipal government in the township was a meeting of ratepayers called for the appointment of pathmasters and other officers. This meeting was held in 1846, at "the village," as St. Marys was then, and for long after, called. The municipal procedure then was very different from what it is now.

Up to the year 1834, the justices in session managed all local matters as they pleased. In that year an Act



was passed providing that householders at their annual meeting should appoint certain persons to act as fence-viewers. This meeting was also to determine what should be considered a lawful fence. The Act made provision also for opening ditches and water courses, as the fence-viewers might decide.

In 1835 an important change was made, and the Act of that year may be said to form the core of the present Municipal Act. It was enacted that the township clerk should assemble the ratepayers of the township at a time and place agreed upon at the previous yearly meeting. This meeting was empowered to choose the following township officers: The clerk, three commissioners, one assessor, one collector, and any number of persons they thought proper to serve as overseers of highways, roads and bridges, and as poundkeepers. The collector gave bonds to the district treasurer, to whom he paid the proceeds of the rates levied, and the township clerk gave bonds to the commissioners.

The most important change made by this Act was the appointment of the commissioners, to whom was transferred many of the powers respecting the repairing of bridges and roads previously held and exercised by the justices in session.

The board of commissioners was required to meet three times, at the place in which the last township meeting was held, and was authorized to hold as many other meetings as it thought best at any place it might choose. The members were to receive for their services the sum of five shillings per day. The quarter sessions still held the authority as to locating and altering highways, as well as other matters general to the district. The Act of 1839 changed the name "com-

missioners," as set forth in the Act of 1835, to "township wardens." This system was continued up to the year 1841. Previous to this the province was divided into districts, and the Governor-in-Council determined the number of councillors and appointed the warden.

It was the desire of Upper Canadians, however, who disliked paternal government, to elect their wardens and other officers. This furnished the basis of the Act of 1841, which provided for district councils to be composed of one or two members to be elected by each township, and to hold office for three years, retiring in rotation. From these changes in the functions of the local governing bodies, it appears evident that public opinion was approaching the present excellent system. It was not till the year 1850, however, that the Municipal Act was given to the municipalities. With this short sketch of the Municipal Act we will resume the history of Blanshard.

On the third day of January, 1848, the people of Blanshard met at Joseph Case's tavern, in the village of St. Marys, to appoint officers and pass such legislation as might be found necessary for the proper government of the municipality for the current year. At that meeting the following officers were elected, after Mr. George Birtch had been placed in the chair: Millner Harrison, township clerk; Thomas Shoebottom, councillor; Rody Hanley, assessor; Edward Styles, collector; poundkeepers for St. Marys, Samuel Fraligh, Thomas Skinner; in the township, John Switzer, Daniel Powell. The township wardens appear to be left to the last, no doubt to afford an opportunity for the several candidates to make explanations, and appeal to their constituents for a renewal of that confidence with which

they had been honored on former occasions. Rody Hanley, Christopher Sparling, and James Pangburn were declared elected as wardens for that year. Every pathmaster was appointed a fence-viewer in his road division. Height of fences,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet, to be staked and ridered or locked. It was further enacted "that no seed animals or stags to run ; no breachy cattle to run ; no horses to run ; no hogs under 30 pounds to run, all above 40 pounds free-commoners." We subjoin a list of the pathmasters elected in 1847 : Arcihbald McCallum, Joseph Oddy, Nathan Stephens, Henry Morrill, Robert Mackay, William Raynard, C. G. Sparling, James Pangburn, P. Richard Harding, Dinnis Murray, George Bradley, Richard Tasker, John Legg, James Hooper, James Pickard, Thomas Shipley, William Slack, William T. Smith, Henry Willis, William Berry, William Richardson, Edward Docherty, Henry Berry, Francis Robertson, Joseph Willis, Shedrick Clark, Robert Birtch, Joseph Carpenter, John Bettridge, Thomas Foster, Michael Clary, Robert Cruse, John Steel, Alexander Sellars, William Kirk, Francis Anderson, Alexander Cameron, Samuel Fraligh, for the village of St. Marys, all of which was signed by Robert Birtch, Chairman. Some irregularity in connection with this meeting, however, led to the issue of a warrant by William Chalk, Warden of the County of Huron, to Mr. James Clendinning, of St. Marys for a new election, which was held at Ashel Morris German's Tavern, village of St. Marys, when Thomas Christie and Thomas Shoebottom were the candidates. At the close of this contest Mr. Christie was declared elected by a majority of sixteen votes. It will be noticed from the report of these meetings, that Mr. Hanley held the dual offices

of assessor and township warden for the year. On the first day of January, 1849, the ratepayers met at Ashel Morris German's Tavern, St. Marys, and elected the following officers for that year: William Patterson Smith, chairman; Thomas Shoebottom, councillor; Millner Harrison, clerk; Rody Hanley, assessor; Edward Styles, collector; Samuel Fraligh, poundkeeper for St. Marys; C. G. Sparling, Rody Hanley, Henry Willis, township wardens.

In the records of the township previous to the year 1850, I find no statement as to the salaries paid to the several officers. The first statement of accounts is dated July 21, 1847, when the total receipts are £90 8s. 3d., and the expenditure corresponding to this sum exactly. In an item dated September 15th, Mr. Harrison was paid about two per cent. on this amount for clerk's fees, or £1 8s. 3d. This account is certified as being correct by Rody Hanley, C. G. Sparling, and James Pangburn, wardens. In 1848, the receipts in another account amount to £10 10s. 7½d, and the expenditures, to £10 10s. 9d. This statement is certified by George Fraser and T. B. Woodliff, district auditors, leaving a balance due the clerk of three halfpence.

On March the 7th, 1847, occurs an entry which will be somewhat amusing to the people of Blanshard of to-day. The first entry is made on March the 8th, 1847, as follows: "Millner Harrison's mark is a split in the right ear; James Smith's mark is a piece cut out of the end of the right ear; Will. Carrol's mark is a small round hole in each ear; Thomas Ingersoll's mark is a piece of the left ear is split in and cut out under to make a square notch; Jeremiah Caysler's

mark is a split in the left ear Peter Smith's mark is a three cornered burn on the hip ; George Tracey's mark is a split in both ears, forming a swallow tail ; Joshua Brinks' mark is a piece cut out of each ear on the upper side in the shape of a half moon ; Christopher G. Sparling's mark is a round hole in the right ear the size of a musket ball ; Pardon Fuller's mark is a round hole in the right ear, and a half round in the left ear ; Robert Birtch's mark is a round hole and split in the left ear ; Caleb Richardson's mark is a piece cut square off the left ear ; the mark of Noah D. Carroll is a piece cut off from the right ear." This concludes the list of gentlemen who appear to have placed themselves on record. The quotation I have given exactly as it is in the minute book. It would appear, however, that very few of the people of Blanshard availed themselves of this mode of registration in comparison to the population the township must have contained at that period. To five of the parties no date is given to the registrations, but we find Mr. Tracy next to Mr. Harrison, registered on October 14, 1848, Mr. Brink on November 18, 1848, Mr. Sparling on February 15, 1849, Mr. Fuller, on March 10, 1849, Mr. Birtch May 23, 1849, Mr. Richardson January 18, 1850, Mr. Noah Carroll December 6, 1850.

There is no explanation why such a record is necessary, or whether it is intended to distinguish the parties themselves, or any animal of which they may be possessed. This mark is not by any means peculiar to the officers, although a number of those gentlemen appear to have received it. The modern officials of Blanshard, we apprehend, are known by their individuality, and we believe that if they had

to have their ears split, indicating they were not of the common herd of mankind, judging from our own personal feelings the nomination papers would show a lamentable paucity of names as candidates for municipal honor.

The first by-law of which any record can be found is a by-law relating to poundkeepers and their duties. This piece of legislation in many of its clauses is about the same as the by-law in force at the present day, which governs those officers in Blanshard. In the last clause, relating to the penalties imposed for neglect of its provisions, it is enacted "that all the above mentioned animals shall receive a sufficient quantity of water every day, or in default thereof, the poundkeeper shall receive no pay for feeding." This is an important provision, surely, and would certainly have the effect of compelling that important officer to do his duty. The by-law is dated February 13, 1847, and signed by Rody Hanley, C. G. Sparling, and James Pangburn, wardens.

With the close of the year 1849 ends all record of the transactions of the local government of the township of Blanshard under the old system. The legislation known as the Municipal Act of Upper Canada was passed in the year 1850; in 1851 a new order of business was introduced in the management of municipal affairs. The old town meeting day became a thing of the past. A district councillor was no longer elected. The office of township wardens was abolished. By the authority of the new act the Council as at present constituted commenced its long career of usefulness, bringing many salutary and beneficent changes to the people. The great principle involved in this

piece of legislation remains the same to-day as it was fifty years ago. Any changes or amendments it may from time to time have received have been only in detail, as the circumstances arising from an advancing civilization required. That grand principle of placing the voting power in the hands of the tax-paying power has never been interfered with. The close proximity of the governing force to those who are governed has not been materially changed. The interests of the representative men who sit at the Board are identical with the interest of those who placed them in that honorable position. As a natural consequence, therefore, all their transactions are framed on strict lines of economy, and with a view to the best interests of their constituents. The tendency of the near relationship of the Council to the people is to give dignity to the aspirant after municipal honors, by so influencing his conduct as to give him some standing in the eyes of the electors. He has a secret feeling in his heart of hearts that some day he will be asked to come up higher and occupy a seat at the table on the platform at the upper end of the township hall. To hundreds of men in Ontario a seat at the township Board marks an epoch in their lives. In many of the homes in this country can be found an old gentleman laden with years, whose eyes fill with a new light when he recounts his almost superhuman effort at the township Board in behalf of economy, and, as he would say, "the present and prospective prosperity of the people of this municipality." Many of these old representative men do not measure their lives as most men do, from the period of their birth, their school-boy days, or maybe from the day they stood at the altar,

but will date all their after life from that year when first they were elected to the Council.

In compliance, therefore, with the new Municipal Act, the first meeting of the first Council of the township of Blanshard met for the transaction of business at William Guest's, Blanshard Hotel, on January 20th, 1851, at the hour of ten o'clock a.m., we may say nearly fifty years ago. The gentlemen who composed the Board on that important occasion would appear to have been fully aware of the dignity and of the respect which was due in the presence of such an august body as the Council of Blanshard. From the present Council back during the last half century, the representatives of the township have been quite exacting of that observance which is due, and which should always be accorded, to those who have been invested with authority and power. In the statement subjoined will be found the names of the various officers of the township, from the period of the introduction of the Act of 1850 to the present time. Previous to the year 1867 the reeves were elected by the Board; subsequent to 1867 they were elected by the people.



## OFFICERS OF BLANSHARD TOWNSHIP, 1851-1899.

YEAR.	REEVE.	DEPUTY REEVE.	COUNCILLORS.	CLERK.	ASSESSOR.	TREASURER.	COLLECTOR.	AUDITORS.
1851	T. B. Guest.....	.....	{ A. Hill ..... H. Willis ..... G. Adare ..... W. Chambers..... }	T. Ingersol..	J. K. Clendening.	T. Christie....	W. Sparrow..	{ J. Ingersol..... W. P. Smith.... }
1852	J. Robinson.....	G. Adare.....	{ H. Willis..... M. Sinclair..... T. B. Guest..... }	T. Ingersol..	J. K. Clendening.	T. Christie....	W. Sparrow..	{ J. Ingersol..... W. P. Smith.... }
1853	T. B. Guest.....	A. Hill .....	{ H. Willis..... D. Cathcart..... W. Beatty..... }	T. Ingersol..	G. Adare.....	T. Christie....	W. Sparrow..	{ J. K. Clendening. R. Hanley..... }
1854	A. Hill .....	G. McIntosh .....	{ D. Cathcart..... S. McDonald..... R. Tims..... }	T. Christie..	G. Adare.....	T. Christie....	W. Sparrow..	{ W. Barron ..... J. R. Burrit..... }
1855	A. Hill .....	D. Cathcart.....	{ A. Doupe..... Jas. Dinsmore..... A. McDonald..... }	W. Wilson..	G. Adare.....	J. Armstrong..	W. Sparrow..	{ W. Miller..... W. Woods..... }
1856	D. Cathcart.....	A. Doupe.....	{ J. Dinsmore..... J. Dunnell..... J. R. Burrit..... }	W. Wilson..	W. N. Ford.....	W. Miller.....	R. Hanley...	{ T. Williams..... W. Woods..... }
1857	D. Cathcart.....	A. Doupe.....	{ J. Dinsmore..... T. Williams..... J. Dunnell..... }	W. Wilson..	W. N. Ford.....	W. Miller.....	R. Hanley...	{ John Dalzell ..... W. Woods..... }

1858	D. Cathcart.....	A. Doupe.....	J. Dunnell.....	{ J. Dinsmore..... C. Switzer..... T. Williams..... }	W. Wilson.....	A. Doupe.....	W. Miller.....	R. Hanley.....	{ A. Hill..... W. Woods..... }
1859	D. Cathcart.....	J. Dunnell.....	{ J. Dinsmore..... T. Williams..... R. Switzer..... }	W. Wilson.....	A. Doupe.....	W. Miller.....	R. Hanley.....	{ A. Hill..... T. Wilson..... }	
1860	J. Dunnell.....	D. Cathcart.....	{ J. Dinsmore..... T. D. Hamilton..... F. Anderson..... }	W. Wilson.....	W. Raymond.....	W. Miller.....	G. Adare.....	{ Hugh Patterson..... T. Wilson..... }	
1861	J. Dunnell.....	F. Anderson.....	{ A. Shier..... R. Hanley..... B. Stanley..... }	W. Calhoun.....	A. Doupe.....	W. Miller.....	C. D. Sparling.....	{ Capt. Campbell..... W. Woods..... }	
1862	B. Stanley.....	E. R. Gooding.....	{ A. Shier..... J. Dunnell..... F. Anderson..... }	W. Wilson.....	J. Livingstone.....	W. Miller.....	D. Cathcart.....	{ David Dinsmore..... W. Woods..... }	
1863	B. Stanley.....	F. Anderson.....	{ J. Whimster..... W. Sparrow..... E. R. Gooding..... }	W. Wilson.....	Capt. Campbell.....	W. Miller.....	D. Cathcart.....	{ M. Rooney..... D. Dinsmore..... }	
1864	B. Stanley.....	E. R. Gooding.....	{ W. J. Sparrow..... T. Lennox..... F. Anderson..... }	W. Wilson.....	E. Delmage.....	W. Miller.....	D. Cathcart.....	{ W. Woods..... R. Somerville..... }	
1865	B. Stanley.....	E. R. Gooding.....	{ J. Gould..... H. Thompson..... F. Anderson..... }	W. Wilson.....	E. Delmage.....	W. Miller.....	D. Cathcart.....	{ W. Woods..... R. Somerville..... }	
1866	J. Gould.....	H. Thompson.....	{ F. Anderson..... E. R. Gooding..... B. Stanley..... }	W. Wilson.....	E. Delmage.....	W. Miller.....	D. Cathcart.....	{ W. Woods..... R. Somerville..... }	

1867  
L. Cathcart.....  
A. Doupe.....  
J. Dunnell.....  
T. Williams.....  
J. Dunnell.....  
W. Wilson.....  
W. N. Ford.....  
W. Miller.....  
R. Hanley.....  
John Dalszell.....  
W. Woods.....

## OFFICERS OF BLANSHARD TOWNSHIP, 1851-1899.—Continued.

YEAR.	REEVE.	DEPUTY REEVE.	COUNCILLORS.	CLERK.	ASSESSOR.	TREASURER.	COLLECTOR.	AUDITORS.
1867	E. R. Gooding.	J. Dinsmore	{ D. McDougal. A. Shier. G. Huston.	W. Wilson.	E. Delmage.	W. Miller.	D. Cathcart.	{ M. Rooney. R. Somerville.
1868	J. Dinsmore.	G. Huston	{ A. St. John. A. M. Driver. D. McDougal.	W. Wilson.	J. Livingstone.	W. Miller.	D. Brethour.	{ Capt. Campbell. J. Stephens.
1869	D. Cathcart.	A. M. Driver.	{ A. St. John. D. McDougal. A. Jamieson.	W. Wilson.	E. Delmage.	W. Miller.	D. Brethour.	{ Capt. Campbell. W. Robinson.
1870	D. Cathcart.	G. Huston.	{ A. Jamieson. G. D. Lowrie. W. Johnston.	W. Wilson.	J. Livingstone.	W. Miller.	D. Brethour.	{ Capt. Campbell. W. Robinson.
1871	D. Cathcart.	G. Huston.	{ A. Jamieson. G. D. Lowrie. W. Johnston.	W. Wilson.	J. Livingstone.	W. Miller.	D. Brethour.	{ Capt. Campbell. W. Robinson.
1872	A. M. Driver.	D. Brethour.	{ J. Dinsmore. R. Beatty. W. Stirratt.	W. Wilson.	W. McCullough.	G. Huston.	W. Graham.	{ Capt. Campbell. T. O. Robson.
1873	D. Brethour.	R. Beatty.	{ J. Dinsmore. W. McCullough. P. McVannell.	W. Johnston.	G. White.	J. Stephens.	W. Graham.	{ Capt. Campbell. T. O. Robson.
1874	D. Brethour.	R. Beatty.	{ W. McCullough. J. Dinsmore. P. McVannell.	W. Johnston.	J. Morria.	J. Stephens.	W. Graham.	{ Capt. Campbell. E. Delmage.

1874 D. Brethour.....	R. Beatty.....	{ W. McCullough. J. Dinsmore..... P. McVannell..	W. Johnston J. Morris.....	J. Stephens.....	W. Graham..	{ Capt. Campbell.. E. Delmage.....
1875 R. Beatty .....	John Dinsmore..	{ P. McVannell.. W. McCullough. A. Sawyer.....	W. Johnston E. Delmage.....	J. Stephens.....	W. Graham..	{ Capt. Campbell.. Philip Kerr.....
1876 R. Beatty .....	John Dinsmore..	{ P. McVannell.. W. McCullough. A. Sawyer.....	W. Johnston E. Delmage.....	J. Stephens.....	W. Graham..	{ Capt. Campbell.. Philip Kerr.....
1877 Jas. Dinsmore..	W. McCullough.	{ A. Sawyer..... A. St. John..... Jas. Spearin...	W. Johnston A. M. Driver....	D. Cathcart...	W. Graham..	{ Capt. Campbell.. Philip Kerr.....
1878 Jas. Dinsmore..	W. McCullough.	{ A. Sawyer..... Jas. Spearin... W. F. Sanderson	W. Johnston R. Beatty.....	D. Cathcart...	W. Graham..	{ Capt. Campbell.. Philip Kerr.....
1879 A. M. Driver....	W. F. Sanderson.	{ A. Sawyer..... Jas. Spearin... W. Roger .....	W. Johnston R. Beatty.....	D. Cathcart...	W. Graham..	{ Capt. Campbell.. G. D. Lowrie....
1880 A. M. Driver....	W. F. Sanderson.	{ T. Lawton..... Jas. Spearin... W. Hutchings..	W. Johnston R. Beatty.....	D. Cathcart...	W. Graham..	{ Capt. Campbell.. G. D. Lowrie....
1881 W. F. Sanderson	Jas. Spearin....	{ W. Roger .....	W. Johnston R. Beatty.....	G. D. Lowrie...	W. Graham..	{ Capt. Campbell.. Thos. Pearin ....
1882 W. F. Sanderson	Jas. Spearin....	{ W. Hutchings.. Thos. Lawton.. W. Roger .....	A. M. Driver R. Beatty.....	G. D. Lowrie...	W. Graham..	{ Capt. Campbell.. Thos. Pearin ....
1883 W. Johnston....	T. Lawton.....	{ W. Hutchings.. W. Roger .....	S. Clark .....	G. D. Lowrie...	J. Anderson.	{ J. Campbell..... W. Ford.....

## OFFICERS OF BLANSHARD TOWNSHIP, 1851-1899.—Continued.

YEAR.	REEVE	DEPUTY REEVE.	COUNCILLORS.	CLERK.	ASSESSOR.	TREASURER.	COLLECTOR.	AUDITORS.
1884	W. F. Sanderson	W. Hutchings..	{ W. Graham..... T. Pearin..... G. Hudson.....	S. Clark.....	R. Beatty.....	J. Anderson..	A. Driver....	{ J. Campbell..... R. Somerville....
1885	J. Dinsmore....	T. Lawton.....	{ W. Graham..... G. Hudson..... G. Spearin.....	S. Clark.....	E. Kennedy.....	J. Anderson..	A. Driver....	{ J. Campbell..... W. Ford.....
1886	J. Dinsmore....	T. Lawton.....	{ W. Graham..... G. Spearin..... G. Hudson.....	S. Clark.....	E. Kennedy.....	J. Anderson..	A. Driver....	{ W. Ford..... W. Johnston.....
1887	T. Lawton.....	G. Hudson.....	{ D. Johnson..... J. Dickinson..... P. McVannell..	W. Johnston	E. Kennedy.....	J. Anderson..	G. Lowrie...	{ W. Ford..... W. Roger.....
1888	T. Lawton.....	G. Hudson.....	{ D. Johnson..... P. McVannell.. J. Dickinson...	W. Johnston	E. Kennedy.....	J. Anderson..	G. Lowrie...	{ T. Armstrong.... W. Roger.....
1889	R. Beatty.....	W. Hutchings..	{ R. Berry..... D. Sinclair..... D. Johnson.....	J. Jamieson	E. Kennedy.....	J. Anderson..	G. Lowrie...	{ T. Armstrong.... W. Roger.....
1890	R. Beatty.....	W. Hutchings..	{ Robert Berry... D. Sinclair..... D. Johnson.....	J. Jamieson	E. Kennedy.....	P. S. Armstrong	G. Lowrie...	{ W. Roger..... J. Campbell....
1891	W. Hutchings..	D. Johnson.....	{ R. Berry..... R. St. John..... D. Sinclair.....	J. Jamieson	E. Kennedy.....	P. S. Armstrong	G. Lowrie...	{ J. Campbell..... W. Roger.....

1891 W. Hutchings..	D. Johnson.....	{ R. Berry..... R. St. John..... D. Sinclair.....	J. Jamieson.....	E. Kennedy.....	P. S. Armstrong	G. Lowrie.....	{ J. Campbell..... W. Roger.....
1892 W. Hutchings..	D. Johnson.....	{ R. Berry..... R. St. John..... D. Sinclair.....	J. Jamieson.....	E. Kennedy.....	P. S. Armstrong	G. Lowrie.....	{ J. Campbell..... W. Roger.....
1893 D. Johnson.....	R. Berry.....	{ R. St. John..... W. Robinson..... G. Ulyott.....	J. Jamieson.....	E. Kennedy.....	A. Brethour...	G. Lowrie.....	{ J. Burns..... J. Campbell.....
1894 D. Sinclair.....	R. St. John.....	{ W. Robinson..... J. Fotheringham G. Ulyott.....	J. Jamieson.....	E. Kennedy.....	P. Armstrong.	R. Beatty....	{ W. F. Sanderson J. Campbell.....
1895 D. Sinclair.....	R. Berry.....	{ G. Ulyott..... J. Fotheringham W. Dinsmore...	J. Jamieson.....	E. Kennedy.....	W. Cade.....	R. Beatty....	{ W. F. Sanderson. J. Campbell.....
1896 R. Berry.....	G. Ulyott.....	{ J. Fotheringham W. Dinsmore.... A. Marriott.....	J. Jamieson.....	E. Kennedy.....	W. Cade.....	R. Beatty....	{ W. F. Sanderson. J. Burns.....
1897 R. Berry.....	G. Ulyott.....	{ J. Fotheringham W. Dinsmore.... A. Marriott.....	J. Jamieson.....	E. Kennedy.....	W. Cade.....	R. Beatty....	{ W. Johnston.... J. Burns.....
1898 R. Berry.....	.....	{ G. Ulyott..... J. Fotheringham W. Dinsmore.... A. Marriott.....	J. Jamieson.....	E. Kennedy.....	A. Brethour...	R. Beatty....	{ W. Johnston.... J. Burns.....
1899 G. Ulyott.....	.....	{ A. Marriott..... E. McDonald.... David Bowers.. Chas. Robinson.	J. Jamieson.....	E. Kennedy.....	A. Brethour...	R. Beatty....	{ Jas. Morrison... M. Irving.....

February 6th, 1888, first Board of Health, W. F. Sanderson, David Brethour and Thomas Eppelett. Dr. Irving, Medical Health Officer.  
With Thomas Lawton. Reeve, and William Johnston, Clerk (ex-officio).

The Council of 1851 was an important one. The new Act had come into operation, and the whole machinery of the proper administration of the law had to be put in motion. A set of officers had to be appointed, who of necessity must have had no experience in the work they had to perform. In the records of their meetings in 1851 many things occur that would lead to grave consequences with any representative pursuing the same policy now, but which were thought to be quite legitimate at that time. It does not appear, however, that any of them were over-paid for their services. The clerk received £12 10s., collector £12, assessor £16 10s., councillors each 6s. 3d. per day, auditors £1 each, returning officers 12s. 6d. The treasurer was to receive  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent for all moneys passing through his hands. In July of 1851 it was ordered that  $\frac{1}{8}$  of a penny in the pound be levied on all the property in the township, to build a bridge over the Thames, near the village. This was the old frame structure that stood on the site of the present stone bridge on Queen street, St. Marys. The contract was let by tender to William Noble for £150, not including the approaches. The filling was a separate contract, and on the east end extended as far (or nearly so) as where Water street crosses Queen. In this year was also organized the London and Proof Line Gravel Road Co., which built the first gravel road west of St. Marys. The Council, recognizing the utility of such an undertaking, borrowed the sum of £2,000 to assist in its construction. In February, 1853, the Council met at James McKay's hotel, and fixed the rate for tavern licenses at £5 10s. for the town, and £3 10s. for the township. The tavern inspectors, of which there were



five, received each £1 10s. for their work. The inspectors appointed were J. K. Clendening, Reuben Switzer, Rody Hanley, William McCauly, and Thomas Anderson. In the year 1856 the salary of the several officers had been advanced, and an allowance was made to the clerk of £20, assessor £13, collector £15, auditors each £1 10s., councillors each per day 10s., inspectors of licenses each £1 10s., returning officers 15s. From this date the Board held its meetings at Skinner's Corners, which, since 1856, has been the seat of Government for Blanshard. The allowance of 2½ per cent. to the treasurer was still recognized as the proper mode of paying that officer, and continued to be so till the year 1870, when the Council withdrew the percentage and allowed a salary per annum instead.

In 1888 was organized the first Board of Health under the provisions of the Health Act of Ontario, and was composed of William F. Sanderson, David Brethour, and Thomas Epplett, with the reeve and clerk *ex-officio*. With the Board was associated William Irving, M.D., of Kirkton, as Medical Health Officer. The members of the present Board are David Brethour, Robert Bilyea, William F. Sanderson, with the reeve and clerk, and Dr. Ferguson, of Kirkton, as Medical Health Officer. In 1897 was introduced the Act relating to county councils. This act was intended to reduce the number of county councillors. In many of the counties of Ontario the councils had become cumbersome and unwieldy. It had the important effect of destroying to some extent the voting power of the smaller villages, who contributed but little to the county funds, and thus gave greater influence to the representatives from the township. The county was

divided into districts, each district electing two representatives. Blanshard and Downie form one district, and have elected, since the inauguration of the new system, William F. Sanderson and Nelson Monteith, M.P.P., as their Commissioners to the County Board.

## CHAPTER III.

SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE  
PEOPLE.

WHEN we contrast the condition of the people of Blanshard to-day with that of the early pioneers, the difference is very great indeed. The hardships and inconveniences which were inseparable from the lot of the early settlers are now unknown. In the early days the wants of the people had to be confined in very narrow limits. Many of the modern conveniences which have arisen through the agency of human thought, energy, and enterprise, and are demanded to satisfy the requirements of a luxurious people, were not then in existence. There were no railroads, no telephones, no roads, no schools. The backwoodsman preceded the present order of things, and, as it were, cleared the way for advancing civilization, with its train of costly and luxurious trappings and refining influences. He was not surrounded by the beautiful in art, and his lonely shanty in the forest contained nothing that tended either to elevate or dignify the man. The great domain of nature everywhere around him was as it had been since the world began. Impressive, no doubt, it was in its vastness, and the stillness of its deep leafy solitudes would rouse in the

heart of the settler that feeling which is akin to fear, and which men experience when alone and far from human habitation. The ever-present thought of the home he had left far away across the sea, it may have been, seemed to embitter his feelings in the exile he had imposed on himself. But nothing could be gained by brooding over his present condition. He had determined to make a home for himself and family, and with time and labor he would doubtless accomplish it. Hope, like a siren, still beckoned him on, and where ordinary thrift was thrown into the struggle the reward was sure. In all the difficulties of pioneer life one feeling seemed to be shared in common by the settlers, that was the feeling of warm mutual sympathy. The lives of all were so much alike that a bond of union sprang up amongst them, so strong that the greatest sacrifices would be made for one another. They were all poor, and this effectually set at defiance those petty jealousies that we so frequently notice at the present day. They helped each other to build houses, clear the land, reap the little crop they were able to grow among the stumps, and shared the last morsel of food with each other. That need of excitement which seems to be necessary to human happiness and human enjoyment could be satisfied only at the raising, or the logging bee. Strong liquors were used freely by nearly all in most sections, and after the labor of the day was over in the field, the night would often be spent in revelry and song, until the very woods rang again with their mirth. In the summer a walk in the woods was glorious indeed. The thick canopy of foliage effectually intercepted the hot rays of the sun, and the aroma which everywhere filled the atmosphere,

from the ferns and other plants that grew in luxuriance in the shade, was delightful. Of flowers there were but few, and these few delicate and spiritless, offering but scant sustenance to the little humming-birds that darted here and there in search of food.

The few cattle which were owned by the settler roamed at will through the woods, one in each herd carrying a bell, the tinkle, tinkle, tinkle of which would be heard all the day long, some near and distinct, and some far off, the faint tones falling on the ear like a distant echo. Each settler knew the sound of his own bell, and could easily distinguish it from all others.

In the spring, when the snow had disappeared and the warm April sun drew energy and sweetness into the maple, sugar camp fires blazed everywhere. The great cauldron kettle was placed on the ox-sled. The tapping gouge, the spiles, the troughs which had been piled up, were brought into requisition. The mistress of the house and all the children were set on the sled, and away to the woods, laughing and shouting with glee at the glorious prospect of abundance of sugar, taffy, and maple molasses! The night has been a little frosty, but the sun is shining clear and hot, and when the axe is struck into the great old maple, the sap literally gushes from the wound. By the time the kettle is hung over the pole the buckets are nearly half full, and the great logs are soon blazing up around it. The little ones are yelling with delight as each, with a little pail, runs from tree to tree, gathering the sweet sap and emptying it in the cauldron, which soon begins to give as much steam as an engine. The day wears on, and the sap in the kettles is taking

on a different hue ; the little ones have ceased to carry from the trees, and remain near the fire, watching the fast diminishing fluid as its particles become more tenacious. At last the grand climax of their hopes is reached, and pails, skimmers, cups, plates, and vessels of all descriptions are brought into requisition, so that each and all can taste of the sweet reward of their labors. But the sun is now far in the west, and a cold feeling is in the atmosphere. The fires are burning low, and the results of the day's labor are prepared for removal to the shanty. The oxen are put to the sled ; the children, with faces covered with a mixture of taffy, smut, and leaves, clamber on, each more anxious than the other to protect the contents of the vessel holding the sweets ; and the whole equipage starts through the woods towards the little clearing, all fatigued with the labors of the day.

The home of the pioneer usually contained an article of great utility which cannot be found, or rarely so, in the mansion of to-day. The spinning-wheel during the summer was kept steadily humming preparing the material from which was made clothing for the family. When the wool had been spun, bark was taken from the butternut tree, in a decoction of which it was dyed to the desired color. Weavers were plentiful in the country districts, who soon made it into cloth. In the month of October great webs of this homespun could be found in the house of almost every settler. From this was made the whole of his garments, as well as the clothing for the rest of the family. There was very little fine goods at that time, and the agriculturist, when he was "togged out" in his homespun, and his boots had

got an extra dose of tallow, considered himself "nae sheepshank."

The vehicles of the time were of the most primitive kind. The precursor of all was the ox-sled. With the axe and the auger this implement was always constructed by the settler himself. It contained no iron, and was made entirely with the axe. He went to mill with the sled, drew in his hay and grain with it from among the stumps, and it was equally handy either in the snow or in the mud. The ox-cart came next, which in turn gave place to the wagon. The wagon took first place for many years, both as an article of utility on the farm and for conveying the family on pleasure excursions. Two poles were placed along the sides of the box, and fastened at each end with hooks, and on these poles the seats rested. This was considered perfection itself, and the height of comfort was supposed to have been reached. But the spring seat loomed up. This was soon superseded by the light wagon. But the wildest dreams of the optimist had never reached the idea of the buggy. Those men, however, who were happy in the ox-cart, had grown better off in the world, and with the extension of their means came the extension of the idea for more comforts and luxuries. The step from the wagon to the buggy was one easily made. The faculty of adaptability in man is very great, particularly if it adds to his comfort or his glory.

Through the untiring efforts and industry of the early settlers great improvements were being made. The woods were being cleared, and fields laid out on the various farms, log buildings erected, with here and there on the corner a little square house for a school, all indicating progress and advancement. It was many



years, however, after the first settlers entered Blanshard before that great convenience, the country post office, was introduced. In St. Marys, of course, an office had been established shortly after the township was surveyed. But to those people living in the forest twelve miles away the convenience afforded was small indeed. As a natural consequence few newspapers were read, and the correspondence of a pioneer was very limited. If a settler from the west end of the township undertook a journey to St. Marys with the oxen, he would bring the mail for his neighbors for several miles around his house. In the year 1852 or 1853, Mr. John Bell, an old pioneer residing near the tenth concession on the Mitchell Road, applied for and obtained a post office, which was named Fish Creek. Mr. Bell has the honor of establishing the first post office in Blanshard. This office was of little use to the people at that end of the township, where the villages of Woodham and Kirkton have since sprung into existence.

In the year 1856 a young man from the north of Ireland came into the woods where Kirkton now stands, built a small log building on the bank of Fish Creek, and in this small log hut opened out a general store. His stock was very small indeed, and any two of his pioneer neighbors might have carried off the whole outfit of the commercial venture on their shoulders. He was a most energetic person, however, and soon had the honor of adding to his other lines of business that of being the first postmaster in Kirkton.\*

\* This office is situated across the line in the township of Usborne, although the post-master is a resident of Blanshard. The greater portion of the village is located in this township, as is the office from which a large section of Blanshard people receive their mail. It is, therefore, popularly considered as a Blanshard post-office, although the building in which it is kept is across the line.

This man was Timothy Eaton, proprietor of the great departmental establishment on Yonge Street, Toronto.

The career of Mr. Eaton from the log hut in the woods to the largest commercial emporium in Ontario should certainly merit for him the name of being the Wannamaker of Canada. In 1863 application was made for an office at Woodham, which was obtained, with Walker Unwin as first postmaster. The next office opened was Anderson in 1867, with the late Humphrey White as postmaster. In 1886 Metropolitan office was opened, with William Spence as postmaster. In 1889 Science Hill office was opened, with William Dawson as postmaster. In 1896 Rannock office was opened, with John H. Jamieson as postmaster. The present postmasters in Blanshard are : Col. H. A. L. White, St. Marys ; William A. Smith, Fish Creek (now changed to Prospect Hill) ; John McCurdy, Kirkton, who has held the office for twenty-seven years ; Samuel Ford, Woodham ; John Anderson, Anderson ; Isaac Bailey, Science Hill ; Patrick Maloney, Metropolitan ; John H. Jamieson, Rannock.

In 1869 was organized the Blanshard Agricultural Society, an institution which has been of untold benefit to the agriculturists in the district around Kirkton, where the exhibitions are held. The society under the efforts of the secretary, Mr. Robert Beatty, who has held that position since the inception of the institution thirty years ago, has been a gratifying success. The first Board of Directors were : David Kirk, President ; Robert Beatty, Secretary ; Henry Doupe, Treasurer ; Reuben Switzer, James Bryans, Angus McCallum, Alexander Kirk, Adam Sparling, James Kirk, William Hazelwood, Philip Kerr, Robert Creary ;

Dr. Stubbs, T. D. Ross, Auditors. The present officers are: William Hazelwood, President; William Hanson, Vice-President; Robert Beatty, Secretary-Treasurer; John Fotheringham, Albert Scott, George Bently, John Sawyer, Amos Doupe, Walter Gowans, Samuel Doupe, David Roger. W. R. Carr, V.S.; E. N. Shier and William Brown, Auditors.

The medical profession up till about the year 1868 was unrepresented in Blanshard. The section of country around Woodham and Kirkton depended on St. Marys and Exeter, ten miles away, for professional aid in case of sickness or accident. At that period Dr. Stubbs, a young graduate from Stratford, located in Kirkton, and soon built up a large practice. His health failing, he was succeeded by Dr. Hutchinson, who removed to London after some years, and is now city Medical Health Officer. He was in turn succeeded by Dr. William Irving, who removed to St. Marys, where he has obtained a large practice. Dr. Irving's successor was Dr. Thompson, who remained only a short time, when he was sent by the Presbyterian Church to India. Dr. Ferguson, the present practitioner at Kirkton, has also a large practice, and holds the position of Medical Health Officer for the township.

On the 26th day of March, 1876, was issued the first policy by the Blanshard Mutual Fire Insurance Company. This institution had been agitated for some months in the township. The promoters of the scheme were Aaron Sawyer, James Dinsmore, John Dinsmore, Thomas Pearn, Alex. Smith, W. Johnston, and others. Mr. Robert Beatty, was the first president, and Mr. Johnston was appointed secretary and manager. The

present board is composed of Mr. W. F. Sanderson, president ; Thomas Pearn, James Dinsmore, Peter McVannel, John Leslie, Amos Marriott, Reuben Switzer, William Dale, Thomas Epelelt, directors; P. S. Armstrong, secretary and manager.

During many years Blanshard may be said to have been almost without a single magistrate within her boundaries. Although her citizens were law-abiding as a rule, still little complications would arise which rendered the intervention of a member of the "quorum " necessary. A few years ago a new commission of the peace was issued to several of the prominent ratepayers, and Robert Beatty, Fletcher D. Switzer, John Cameron, George Webster, W. F. Sanderson, Thomas Epelelt, Peter McVannel and William Johnston were appointed to assist Her Most Gracious Majesty in maintaining order amongst her lieges in the County of Perth, in the Province of Ontario.

In the meantime good roads had been made everywhere. Many of the farmers in Blanshard had become comparatively wealthy. In a great majority of the families, instruments had been brought into the home, and a taste for music as well as other of the fine arts was cultivated among the young members of the family. These in turn brought dignity and refinement, and many of the amenities peculiar to a cultured and enlightened age.

In the meantime the Church had been doing her duty. The people had contributed liberally of their means to her extension and support, and altars had been raised to her service everywhere in the township. Bible classes were established, missionary societies formed for the honor and worship of Him whom to know is life eternal.

Education, too, had been encouraged ; the old school houses had been supplanted in the fourteen sections in the municipality by costly and handsome structures for the education of the young and rising generation.

The old log shanties have everywhere disappeared. As late as 1860, Blanshard contained scarcely a frame barn ; at least in the west part of the township all were built of logs. On nearly every farm to-day stands a residence for the farmer and his family, constructed of the most durable material, and in every way fitted in the highest style of the builder's art. And while these costly mansions have been erected for the comfort of the family, great barns and other buildings have been built for the protection of the stock and the care of the implements. When we consider that all this has been accomplished by men still living, such progress appears marvellous indeed. It exemplifies the fact that there are nearer gold fields than the Klondyke, and that Ontario has rewards for thrift and industry at least equal to those of any country in the world. While it pleases us to write of these great industrial achievements by the pioneers of Blanshard, we regret to say that a spirit of emulation had sprung up among the people that, in many cases, led to disastrous consequences. Many of Blanshard's old settlers, vainly endeavoring to keep pace with their more fortunate neighbors in erecting buildings, incurred obligations which they were never able to discharge. It is sad to reflect that not a few have erred in this way, and in their old age have had to leave the scene of their early efforts and seek new homes in the far west.

The people of Blanshard, and indeed of the whole district surrounding St. Marys, rank high in point of

intelligence, as the immense amount of newspaper literature weekly brought to the several post offices in the township amply attests. A high degree of agriculture has been attained, and her farmers are ever ready to adopt the most modern innovations in the line of their calling. They are sober, thrifty, and industrious, and, as a natural result, a very large number have become well-to-do in the world. The twelve or thirteen hotels that were located in different parts of the municipality have, with the exception of one, been all closed and turned to other uses. The roads are all gravelled and kept in the best repair. On every concession are appearances of wealth, prosperity, and happiness.

Blanshard has been particularly fortunate in her public men. During all those years since her foundation her representatives at the Council Board, without a single exception, have been guilty of no act dishonorable to themselves. They may have erred in judgment—"to step aside is human"—but theirs were errors of the head, not of the heart. Her people are loyal to the country of which they form a part, and have unbounded confidence in the future of the Dominion. Their love for their beloved Queen and the ties that bind them to Great Britain are more than a sentiment, they are a passion, and, we hope, as time passes away, they will become more and more indissoluble. We are proud to know that Canada is destined to be a great nation, over which will still float the grand old flag that has "braved for a thousand years the battle and the breeze."

## LIFT UP THE OLD FLAG.

Lift up the old flag, lead on thy young scion ;  
To fame and to glory still marshal the way ;  
In its white folds of peace sleeps the voice of the lion.  
The North shall assemble and march to the fray,  
And forward shall lead the van ;  
Canadians, every man,  
For our home and our country we'll defy every foe ;  
From forest and distant plain  
Roll on the mighty strain,  
"The Dominion for ever, yo ho, i-e-roee!"

Lift up the old flag, and name not surrender  
While the banner of Britain still floats on the breeze.  
From the hills of the North shall arise a defender  
That shall strike for her fame, on land and on seas.  
Our foemen shall tremble  
Where our heroes assemble,  
O'er the wild field of fury triumphant to go ;  
That old flag of the free  
Our emblem shall be,  
"The Dominion forever, yo ho, i-e-roee!"

Lift up the old flag, let us gather around it ;  
Moor its staff in the rock, to the breeze let it fly ;  
'Tis the flag of our fathers, in glory we found it,  
In glory we'll leave it, or defending will die.  
Whose fame that won't cherish,  
Let his name ever perish ;  
To the depths of derision the vile coward shall go,  
While we sing out the happy strain,  
Let hills and rocks ring again,  
"The Dominion for ever, yo ho, i-e-roee!"

## CHAPTER IV.

## VILLAGES, SCHOOLS, AND CHURCHES

ze. **I**N a township possessing so many natural advantages as Blanshard, one would suppose that a number of little villages would be found within its borders. Such is not the case. No doubt this is owing to the town of St. Marys being located near the centre of what is known as the "Gore." All the main roads converge in this, the commercial point where nearly all the trading is done, not only for a large portion of Blanshard, but for others of the surrounding municipalities. In St. Marys are found many large manufacturing establishments, and goods of every description can be obtained at such rates as leaves no inducement for people to purchase elsewhere. Immense quantities of farm produce are shipped from this place, an evidence of the fertility of the soil and the skill with which it is cultivated. Of the three villages or "corners" which have sprung up in the boundaries of the municipality, Kirkton must be awarded first place as to present population.

The first building in this pretty and prosperous little business centre was a small log house which stood on the edge of Fish Creek, in rear of the large brick store now owned and occupied by Shier & Marshall. Into



this log house Timothy Eaton, now of Toronto, brought his stock of merchandise early in the fifties, for the accommodation of the settlers in that out-of-the-way section of country. In this log house also was opened, by Mr. Eaton, in 1856, the first post office between St. Marys and Exeter, a distance of over twenty miles. This backwoods emporium was erected on the eastern side of the road.

On the corner of lot 8, in the W. B. of Blanshard, a small brick cottage was next built and occupied by a gentleman by the name of Neelon. In this establishment Mr. Neelon placed a stock of goods suitable to the requirements of the settler. Mr. Eaton removing to St. Marys about this time, the commercial interest of Kirkton fell into his hands. This building was afterwards remodelled and used for many years as a hotel. The hotel being abolished the old house was taken down, and the present large brick edifice erected by Mr. Taylor, its present occupant. Adjoining the hotel to the east stood a log house occupied by a shoemaker, where the brick building of Roadhouse & Brown now stands, and still further east Mr. John Callander had opened a blacksmith shop—the first in that section. In 1860 these were all the buildings in Kirkton on either side of the boundary.

In 1861 or '62 a new frame store was erected by William and Robert Currie, on the site of the present dwelling north of Shier & Marshall's.

The progress of this village was retarded for several years by the conduct of the proprietor of lot 9, on which is now built a large portion of the village. In 1859 he had cleared that corner of his farm, but persistently refused to sell any part of it for building pur-

poses ; and it was not until the place came into Mr. Doup's possession that any great progress was made. Mr. Alexander Kirk had made a survey into lots of part of No. 8, and was followed soon after by Mr. Doup's survey of No. 9. This action of these two gentlemen gave an impetus to building operations which has continued, with some intermissions, ever since.

The name Kirkton was given to the village in honor of the Kirk family, who were the pioneers in that section of Blanshard and the adjoining township of Usborne. Three of the brothers, Alexander, Lewis, and James, located on three of the farms on which the village is built ; the other three brothers, David, Robert, and John, residing on adjoining lands. The site of the village is all that could be desired, occupying as it does the level grounds receding backwards from Fish Creek. It contains a number of residences that would do honor to more pretentious places. Side-walks are laid on all the principal streets, which are lined with shade trees whose foliage in the summer months affords a refreshing shade for the citizens. The present population is over 200.

Exactly one mile and a quarter to the south, on the same boundary line, lies the village of Woodham. How this village received its name we are unable to say. Previous to its being made a post office it was known only as the "Corners." This village was founded by an English gentleman by the name of Unwin. In 1859, when we first set foot in what is now Woodham, it contained one house on the corner of lot 12, and which building still stands. Mr. Unwin had bought a small stock of goods, the disposal of which was a sup-

plementary aid to the profits accruing from his efforts on the farm which he occupied at the same time. On the opposite corner, where the post office is now located, the old woods still waved in luxuriance. On the other side of the road, in Usborne, workmen were busy erecting a hotel building for a Mr. Creary. Some distance north, another and most useful building was being erected for a grist mill, by a gentleman from London by the name of Campbell. These three buildings, with a shanty on the other corner, where lived one of the settlers, constituted, in 1860, the village of Woodham. Through the efforts of Mr. Unwin a post office was opened in 1862 or 1863, with himself as postmaster, and which office he retained while he remained in the municipality.

In later years a saw mill and pump factory have been added to the industries of the village, gravel side-walks have been laid down on the principal streets, and the great number of shade trees give the place a handsome appearance. In late years several beautiful residences have been erected by its citizens, indicating a progressive character and a desire to keep fully abreast of the advanced ideas of the times. The rivalry that existed for many years between these two places for precedence seems to have passed away, and a kindly interest is now manifested between them on all occasions.

The village is composed of about thirty families, whose number may be 150.

The only other village in Blanshard, is Prospect Hill, situated on the boundary line of Biddulph. With the exception of one dwelling place, it is wholly in Blanshard. Although surrounded by a splendid section of country, prospect, as it is called, has not been

so progressive as the two sister villages of Woodham and Kirkton. Its situation is all that could be desired, standing as it does on what is perhaps the highest elevation in the township, and from which an excellent view can be obtained over a large section of country. The first post office in Blanshard outside of St. Marys was established by Mr. Bell at Fish Creek in 1852. It was afterwards removed to Prospect, where it has ever since remained.

Long before Woodham or Kirkton came into existence, this was an important point, and could boast of having two hotels for the accommodation of the travelling public. Previous to the building of the G. T. R., great quantities of produce passed through to London over the London and Proof Line road from Blanshard, Fullarton, and the country to the north. Every day long strings of teams were passing and repassing to and from the city, then the great commercial centre of the west. Prospect in those days was a place of considerable consequence.

In later years, however, the stream of commerce was directed into other channels. The Grand Trunk had been built. St. Marys had grown into importance. A new village had sprung up at Granton, a few miles to the west, on the line of the railway. These places had the effect of destroying the traffic passing to London, and since then Prospect has somewhat fallen in the rear of the other villages in Blanshard. It still contains a good general store, blacksmith shop, and a few private residences as remnants of its former glory.

#### EDUCATION.

To the matter of education for their children the early settlers of Blanshard contributed liberally of their

means for its dissemination and support. Wherever a few pioneers had located, their first great effort was to erect a school-house for the training of their families. Humble little places they were, and destitute of all the conveniences and comforts of the fine buildings erected for educational purposes at the present day. In the centre of the little settlement, and usually at a cross-road, the old log school-house was built. Unpretentious it was, and in the summer months the boys made sad havoc with the chinking between the logs, for the purpose of letting in plenty of air to the little chamber. The furniture was of the most primitive kind. Around the walls on both sides were arranged the desks for the more advanced scholars. These desks were composed of a couple of boards laid on pins which had been driven into auger holes made in the logs that formed the wall. In front of these desks were benches made from plank, and in these at each end were auger holes in which were inserted pins for their support. For the smaller children, benches of the same description were set across the building, on which, day after day, they spent in listless weariness the hours prescribed for receiving their mental training. The door was always in the end of the little low building, and on the floor in front of it sat a great box stove which in the winter was kept at a glowing heat. At the farther end was placed the master's chair. The walls were uneven, and ornamented here and there with a lonely map, which seemed as if it had lost its way and had been stuck upon the rough logs by mistake. In those little log school-houses on the corner some of Canada's great men received the rudiments of their education.

But the whirligig of time brought its changes. The settlements grew and prospered, and with prosperity came the desire for better school accommodation for the education of the young and rising generation. That affectionate solicitude which is ever wakeful and watchful in the bosom of parents for the protection of their children, was soon productive of better things. Indeed, the improvement in the school premises in many instances was far in advance of the improvements in church edifices or the private dwellings of the people. It is now many years since the last log school-house in Blanshard passed out of existence. In every one of the fourteen sections into which the township is divided, comfortable and substantial buildings of brick or stone have been erected. In all of the schools the most elaborate and modern equipment, under an advanced system of education, is to be found. The school property and the committees in connection therewith are under the most careful inspection of officers appointed by the municipality. Every precaution is taken to insure the most perfect sanitary conditions on the premises and for the promotion of the health and comfort of the children.

At what precise period of time many of the first school sections in the township were formed it would be impossible for me to say, as no record is to be found in the archives of the municipality regarding the formation of the first section. In 1851 a motion was passed by the Council adopting certain by-laws then in force, "and that the said by-laws remain in full force and virtue until repealed." By-law No. 8 of this code relates to the division of the municipality into school sections. It is therefore clear that the division had been made for

school purposes previous to the passing of the Municipal Act. This by-law, together with several papers in connection with the early history of Blanshard, I have been unable to discover.

The Council of 1851, being the first Council acting under the new municipal law, was singularly fortunate in being able to dispose of school matters in such a summary way. The lines of their successors did not all fall in such pleasant places. The conflict over the existing boundaries and the formation of new school sections soon began, and continued to rage with almost unabated fury, in some parts of the municipality, till the year 1881, when union section No. 14 was brought into existence. This was the last section formed in the township, after an almost uninterrupted conflict of nearly thirty years. The question of school sections was one on which were wrecked the hopes of many an aspirant after municipal honors. At the Board, for nearly the whole period from 1852 up till 1870, the question of schools seems to have been kept up with great energy and determination. At one meeting a deputation would appear, and after giving certain explanations, the Board would place on record a motion giving effect to the desired scheme of the applicants. At the next meeting the opposing party would appear in force, and having given their views in language more forcible than elegant, the former motion would be rescinded and the whole affair be allowed to remain, as it is recorded, "*in status quo.*"

This state of affairs, to say the least, was not creditable to the Board. It appears to us, notwithstanding our high appreciation of municipal men, that the action of Council must have been founded to a

great extent on the number and influence of the deputation with which they were dealing for the time being, rather than on the justice or fairness of the principles propounded by parties. The pledges which had been made by some of the legislators to their constituents, previous to their election, in the matter in dispute, were now openly and in rude and emphatic language thrown back. In extreme cases, if the councillor was not able by his intellectual superiority or by an exhaustive explanation of the fairness of the course he was pursuing, to satisfy the irate electors, recourse to physical arguments of the most convincing kind on more than one occasion settled the question.

It may fairly be said now, however, that out of the thirty years' war of the school sections an order of things has been evolved that seems to give satisfaction to the great mass of the people. Indeed it is doubtful if better arrangements could be made regarding school boundaries than at present exist in the township. And such seems to be the feeling of the people, as since 1881 no legislation of any importance has been asked for by that Board in connection with the schools.

#### TOWNSHIP LIBRARY.

The Council, having succeeded in establishing schools in the several sections which had been formed in the municipality, next turned its attention to giving further educational facilities to the people by establishing a township library. On the 25th day of November, 1853, at a meeting of the Board, it was moved by Henry Willis, seconded by Mr. Cathcart, that £50 be granted for the purpose of establishing a library for



the people of Blanshard. This motion was carried with the approval of the whole Board. The Council, feeling itself in some degree inadequate to the proper carrying out of such an important matter as the selection of the books, at a subsequent meeting made further arrangements. On the 21st day of December, in the same year, on motion of Messrs. Hill and Cathcart, the whole Council was appointed a library committee. With this committee were named as associates, William Woods, Johnston Armstrong, Rev. Mr. Lampman, Dr. Wilson, J. K. Glendinning, J. R. Bennett, Dr. Wood, Dr. Coleman, and all the clergymen of all denominations. A township librarian was appointed, with a salary of four pounds per annum, and to give security in the sum of forty pounds; the ward librarians to receive two pounds per annum for their services, and to give security in the sum of twenty pounds for the proper performance of their duties. The officers appointed to act in the several wards were: in No. 1, Thomas McIntosh, who was also township librarian. Mr. McIntosh received sixty-five volumes. This was, no doubt, for that portion of the municipality north of St. Marys. In ward No. 1 was also appointed Duncan McVannell, who received fifty-seven volumes for that portion of the ward south of St. Marys. In ward No. 2, John R. Bennett was appointed, and received 133 volumes. In ward No. 3, William Sansburn was appointed, and received 136 volumes. In ward No. 4, Eliza Cathcart was appointed, and received 137 volumes. In ward No. 5, David Merrical was appointed, and received 137 volumes; thus making for the whole, 665 volumes. The institution, whatever may have been the idea of its promoters, did not last long, and could not be said to

be a success. As to the selection of the works by the committee, judging from those we have seen, they appear to have done their duty with excellent judgment.

#### CHURCHES.

Prior to the year 1859, Blanshard contained but few churches, and those it did contain were not of a very substantial order. The west end of the township had no churches at all. It must not be inferred, however, that because there existed no churches there were no religious observances. On the contrary, indeed, many of the old pioneers were very devout, and paid strict attention to their religious duties. All the denominations that exist in the township to-day were in existence then. The true worship of God does not require the "long drawn aisle and fretted vault" to make it acceptable. That joy and peace arising from a close communion with the Most High can be found at the altar raised in the log shanty in as great degree as if the worshipper bent his knee amid pomp and ceremony under the dome of an ancient cathedral. In the various log buildings erected for school purposes the services were held, and when these were not convenient, then the doors of the settlers were always open to the minister who desired to impart religious instruction to the people. Previous to 1859 a Presbyterian Mission had been established at Anderson, on the second concession, and of which mission Mr. Alexander Wood, now of Nissouri, was a most earnest worker. After Mr. Wood removed from Blanshard the services of the Presbyterian body were no longer maintained. A portion of the members united with the Motherwell congregation, and another portion in the west

end of the district joined with a part of the township of Usborne, and established what is now Mr. Colin Fletcher's church, at the head of the third concession of Blanshard. On the Mitchell road, Mr. Johnston Armstrong and others established what is now the Zion congregation. At Prospect Hill the English Church had established a mission and erected a church. The Presbyterians had also raised a church at the lower end of the tenth concession, on the farm of Mr. William Hamilton. The Methodist body also erected a church near the same place. A log church in connection with the Anglican body had also been erected on the corner of lot five, on the sixth concession.

In 1860 a revival seems to have set in with regard to church building. Till this period the Methodists and the Presbyterians both held their services in the old log school-house at Kirkton, which then occupied the spot where the present brick school-house now stands. The Rev. John Fotheringham was then Presbyterian minister in what is now Mr. Fletcher's congregation. Steps were being taken by both bodies for the erection of churches, and shortly after, the Methodist body erected in Kirkton the first brick church ever built in Blanshard. The Presbyterians also erected, about the same time, the old stone church one mile and a quarter to the north. A new church was also erected by the Anglicans in Kirkton, and which at the present time is about to be removed for a handsome brick building on the same site.

The several bodies into which the Methodist Church of to-day was then divided seemed to vie with each other in building churches; and with such zeal and energy did they pursue this craze for church building

that in a few years the township of Blanshard contained or contributed to nearly a score of churches. After that great change in the policy of the Methodist body which has led up to her splendid position of to-day, by a united effort for the extension of her principles, a new order of things has been brought about. When the union was finally consummated, a number of churches were allowed to fall into disuse. The union of the several congregations added strength financially and numerically to the society, which previously had wasted its energy in fighting a part of itself. Thus any one of the old buildings was found to be too small to accommodate the increased congregation that now worshipped together under the same roof.

New churches had therefore to be built ; and in this connection the people of Blanshard have shown a most liberal spirit.

The first move in the line of erecting new buildings was begun in the village of Kirkton several years ago, when a splendid edifice was raised on the site of the old brick one. This innovation on the part of Kirkton was followed by Anderson, and Zion on the Mitchell Road, where handsome and substantial brick buildings have been erected. These three churches, with the fine building at McIntyre's, the brick church at Woodham, the frame church on the tenth concession, and Cooper's church on the base line, and the frame church at Prospect, are all the Methodist churches now in Blanshard. Outside of the town of St. Marys, the township does not contain a Presbyterian church. The Anglican body has a church at Prospect. It may be said, however, that the Methodists own all the church property in Blanshard with the exception of the small building at Prospect Hill.

Thus has passed away the old order of things, and in the great march of progress all seems to have changed. In the short period of sixty years the old woods have nearly all been cleared away. The corduroy roads and the stumps are no longer seen. The oxen and the sled are gone. The log barns are rotted away or burned up. The old cradle and the hand rake are seldom used now. The old log school-house on the corner is long a thing of the past. The old church, too, has been changed. Its environment has also changed. In the grassy plot around where it stood are numerous mounds over which the weeds solemnly wave. These were not there sixty years ago. The old shanty with its hallowed associations has passed away. The old clay fire-place, the chain and the hook that hung from the lug-pole, the old bake-kettle that sat on the hearth, the old benches that stood by the walls, all are gone. The old familiar faces that sat around the great old fire-place sixty years ago and told the old stories of their early homes far away, they too are nearly all gone and sleeping—sleeping in the years of the long ago.

## CHAPTER V.

## MEETINGS AND AMUSEMENTS.

THE amusements which are popular amongst a people will always be found to be in accordance with the manner of thought of those by whom they are patronized. No mode of entertaining can long remain before the public unless it be a reflex to some extent of their lives. The games of a nation are the result of certain traits in the national character. This, again, is collectively the bringing together of the various and most prominent idiosyncrasies of the great mass of individuals. If such be the case, the people whose most popular entertainments are of a high moral order must have moral order in their lives.

On these principles, the people of Blanshard and, indeed, the people of Canada in general, may be said to be highly moral. The tea-meetings held in all sections of the country in aid of the Sabbath-schools, the church social, the concert in the school-house and the entertainment in connection with the local literary society have had and still retain their popularity. These entertainments are in their very nature elevating and purifying, and must have a refining effect on the great mass of people by whom they are so largely patronized. To the residents of the country the tea-

meetings in the woods in summer, the agricultural fair in the autumn, and the concert in the school-house in the winter, afford their principal amusements. These gatherings are of such a nature as to be enjoyed by the young and the old alike. The pleasure of meeting together in the leafy woods after the arduous labor of sowing the seed in spring is not marred by rudeness or boisterous conduct. Kindly salutations are exchanged as each for the other kindly speirs.

Her Majesty's birthday, the 24th of May, is usually selected for the first of these great reunions of the old and the young. At this time the spring seeding has been completed and the fields are green with the soft verdure of early summer. The woods in which these meetings are always held have arrayed themselves in their most beautiful garments. The whole face of nature seems at this period of the year to assume a joyful aspect, and welcomes to her bosom the green grass, the blossoms, and the flowers. The gloomy winter has passed with its snow, its clouds, and its storms, and all the earth rejoices to meet the ardent gaze of the sun as it climbs higher and higher in the bright and cloudless sky.

The grand event of the Sunday-school anniversary is announced by the minister a few Sabbaths previous. From the time of this announcement the interest in the affair begins to increase. Committees are formed to carry out the various arrangements. The choir must practise some new pieces, speakers have to be communicated with, and, most important of all, a "chairman" must be selected. The chairman is usually some prominent public man in the township—if possible, the member for the county. All these arrange-

ments must be carried out before the printing committee can commence its duties.

Bills are at last printed and sent out through the surrounding district announcing the event.

In the meantime in a great number of the farm houses preparations are being made with all speed. The ladies have procured their summer dresses, which have to be ready for the Sabbath anniversary service. On that great day they hope to be the observed of all observers. No young agriculturist will be able to look at those dresses and preserve his peace of mind. But this is not all. The millinery openings have yet to transpire. These important events are crowding on. The opening day does come in its course with other things. In the principal shops in town, what splendor, what beauty, what chaste combination, what blending together of colors, what exquisite flowers and magnificent feathers! All that skill could do and that human ingenuity could accomplish, all that time, labor and money might be said to be able to procure, has been resolved by the deft hand of the ingenious manipulator into a little indescribable something about the size of a saucer, or has, in the other extreme, been constructed into a combination like a milk pan, which some of the profane amongst the sterner sex would call a hideous affair, but which the young ladies pronounce to be "just lovely." At last a selection is made and the precious object consigned to the paper bag which the young lady carries in her hand for the rest of the day, until it is finally conveyed in safety to her home. This is the new hat.

Meantime, things are rapidly progressing, for all want to make the 24th a grand success. In all the



houses in the district the ladies are making preparations with the good things for the tables. In the pantry they can be found standing beside the baking-tray and flanked on all sides with paper bags, tins, mugs, cups, flour, cream, butter, sugar, spices, which they are mixing, kneading, and compounding into cakes of various forms and dimensions. A friendly rivalry exists amongst the different families in the line of the best cooking. Besides, when the baskets are brought into the grounds and handed over to the committee appointed to receive them, if the contents are not up to a certain standard, woe betide the poor woman that sent it. Better for her (at that time) she had never been born.

The morning of the eventful day has at last arrived, and the sun is shining bright and clear in a cloudless sky. A glorious day it will be for the anniversary meeting. At an early hour the children of the Sabbath-school have taken to the woods. The swings are kept steadily going, and the merry laughter that rings through the trees would bring light and sunshine and springs of joy and gladness into the heart of the most miserable misanthrope that ever brooded over the wretched condition of his fellowmen.

The teams sent out to gather the baskets are now coming in with their complement of good things prepared for the occasion. The tables are set, and the platform erected for the speakers in a shady part of the grove. The lady whose duty it is to make the tea is at her post, and preparing to outdo all her former efforts. About twelve o'clock the visitors begin to pour into the woods, and in the shady nooks fasten their horses. The member for the county, who has

consented to act as chairman, at last appears on the scene, when hand-shaking and pleasant smiles are the order of the day.

The minister of the congregation at length calls the assembled hundreds to the tables, and announces the following verse in which all join and sing :

Be present at our table, Lord ;  
Be here and everywhere adored ;  
These creatures bless, and grant that we  
May feast in Paradise with Thee.

All fall to! The voracious small boy eyes with satisfaction the ever increasing space as far as he is able to extend his devastating hand. He reaches past the nice young lady in pink, with a bouquet on her bosom, who is primly nibbling like a rabbit at her first sandwich. Her rosy cheeks and plump form indicate, however, that her performances on other occasions would be more vigorous. The more mature matrons and their liege lords at the other parts of the table are already making terrible havoc in their surroundings. Stacks of sandwiches are disappearing like snow in April. Great massive cakes are having huge gashes made in them to their very heart's core. The waiters are all busy replenishing the fast depleting teacups, and passing the cream and the sugar, and the spoons and the knives, and clean plates to new applicants. Here and there the guests at the table are chaffing the waiters, and they in return are chaffing the guests and making jokes over mishaps, at which they all laugh, and they do have such fun.

All being at last satisfied, the chairman takes the platform with the speakers, and the visitors seat them-

selves in front. The choir having sung the opening ode, the chairman gives his address. He congratulates the people on the success of the day's proceedings, and announces the great pleasure it gives him to be present. He regrets his inability to discharge the duties of chairman, but the audience must be satisfied with his good intentions. He eulogizes the country and the well tilled farms, the splendid buildings, the intelligence of the people, whom he feels it is an honor to represent in parliament. He tells some of his queerest stories, at which the audience laughs, and the speakers laugh, and they all laugh, and they have great fun.

Speaker after speaker is called forward to address the people, and they tell their funniest stories and crack jokes on the chairman, at which the chairman laughs, and the audience laughs, and they all laugh, and there is no end of fun.

The last speaker is brought forward; reverend and hoary, bending beneath the weight of years, who, with serious air, reminds the people that though joy may now fill their hearts, sorrow may come in the morning. With his hands stretched out to heaven he bids them look away to another and a better life, that this earth is not their home, and never to forget that life is short but eternity is long. In loving and affectionate tones he gives the audience his blessing, when, having sung "God Save the Queen," all disperse to their homes.

We trust that the people of Blanshard and the people of this country will long continue to make such meetings the places of their greatest enjoyment, and there need be no fear of the prosperity of this young nation. From scenes like these shall Canada's greatness spring.

## SCHOOL ENTERTAINMENTS.

In the winter, when the fruitage of the season has been gathered and stored away in the barns and cellars, and the snow-drifts are piling up around the buildings and levelling up the roads, the people seek other enjoyments. The woods are now leafless and bare, and cold north winds whistle through the groves, driving great wreaths of snow across the dreary, cheerless waste. Entertainments must now be held indoors. The Literary Society is organized, where spirited debates are kept up on some historical or other question which will require some research and knowledge of the subject. Sides are chosen and a chairman appointed; when the contestants are arranged on each side of the house, some of them with great bundles of papers and books of reference, they make an imposing appearance. Music is also part of the programme. Recitations, too, are given, some of the performers rising to great heights in their rendition of the terrible or the sublime.

In all communities we find individual excellences extending in many directions. So, in the country school section are found some in whom the histrionic faculty is waiting development. The young people of this class are anxious to distinguish themselves in the theatrical part of the entertainment. On great occasions they place a piece on the boards, and behind the foot-lights, in antique and fantastic dress, portray to an admiring audience how Si Turnipseed wooed Mandy Cloverleaf, and how Mandy treated with disdain Si's most ardent advances. Si still continues to close up his line of attack, however. Mandy could not be cruel, and finally rewards Si with her smile and her hand. So the plot unravels itself amid the plaudits of the audience,

till Si gains a glorious victory over the timid Mandy, and they are finally married, live long, and die happy.

When the Literary Society has announced one of these interesting and most enjoyable events, large audiences are always present. A small charge is made at the door to defray expenses. A stage is erected at the farther end of the school, and in front of the curtain is left space for the chairman and the organ. At each side are dressing rooms for the performers. At a signal from the chairman the curtain rises and the proceedings are opened with music by the orchestra. Before the admiring and appreciative audience the several events on the programme are brought on by the chairman until it is exhausted, when all join in singing the National Anthem, and the proceedings are brought to a close.

In a short time the horses, which have been in comfortable stables on the farms close to the school-house, are hitched to the sleighs and are waiting for the loads of young people, who are several miles from their homes. The moon is bright in a cloudless sky, and the air is crisp and frosty. With the shouting of the teamsters and the jingling of the sleigh bells the horses are excited, and are pawing the frozen track in their desire to skim away over the smooth snow. At last the sleighs have each received their full complement of laughing, happy young people. When the word "ready" is given, the driver slacks his lines, the bells ring more merrily as the horses bound forward, and a song is begun in which all join. As they speed away the tones of the music falls softer and softer on the ear, and, mingling with the tingling of the bells, dies away as the sleigh, in the fast increasing distance, seems like a dark speck on the snow.

**THE MERRY SLEIGH BELLS.**

(Tune—"The Heather Hills.")

HURRAH! hurrah, for the merry sleigh bells!  
List the ringing and the tinging of their silvery swells;  
And the tones of their voices our bosom thrills  
And echoes the notes of the merry sleigh bells.  
See the pale moon swing in the cloudless sky  
And the laughing stars peep as we merrily fly,  
As our gay young hearts in fitful spells  
Beat in time to the tune of the merry sleigh bells.

**CHORUS.**

Hurrah! hurrah, for the merry sleigh bells!  
List the ringing and the tinging of their silvery swells,  
And the tone of their voices our bosom thrills  
And echoes the notes of the merry sleigh bells.

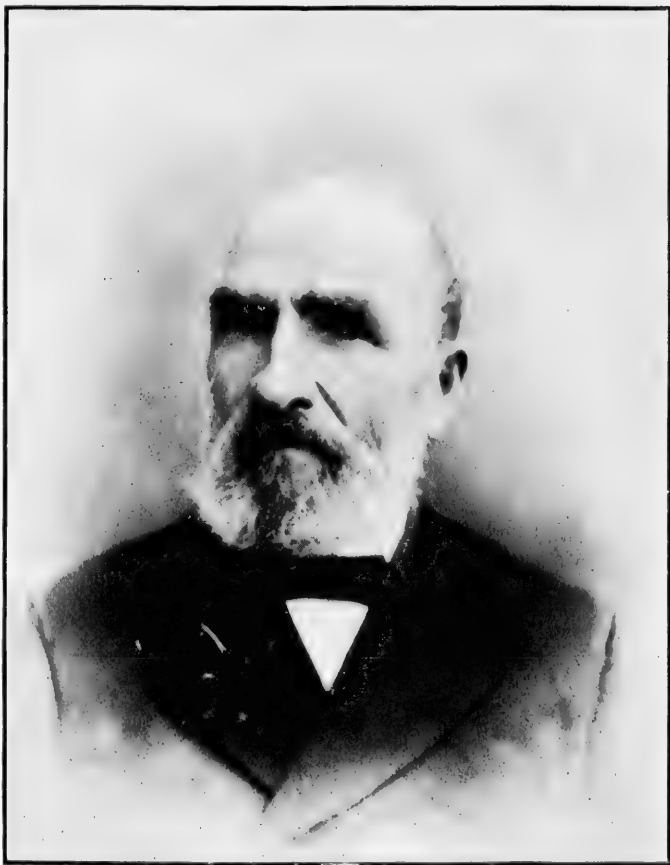
Then away, then away! We're aglow with delight!  
We're free as the air, or a bird in its flight!  
Up, up with the song, till its cadence swells  
In accord with the music of the silver bells!  
Away past the school in its peaceful hour,  
Away past the church in its leafless bower,  
Away past the farm and its frozen rills,  
We are happy as the chime of the merry sleigh bells!

CHORUS—Hurrah! Hurrah, etc

## CHAPTER VI.

## DAVID CATHCART.

DAVID CATHCART, the subject of the following sketch, was born in Port-na-Bleigh, County Fermanagh, Ireland, on the eve of the 5th of November, 1805, which makes him at the present time ninety-three years of age. The family appears to be a branch of the Cathcarts of the west of Scotland, who, at the time of the colonization of the north of Ireland by James I., emigrated to that country and settled in the County of Fermanagh. They were a military family, the Scotch branch of which attained high rank in the British army—notably Major-General Lord Cathcart, whose exploits during the Crimean War brought such lustre to the British arms. During the American war of 1812 some of them fought for the old flag, and at its close settled in the eastern part of the province, in the County of Carlton, named after one of the early governors of Canada, and who was also related to the Cathcarts. Mr. Cathcart was the son of a farmer, and as such was early initiated into the details of farm management. His education in comparison with ours of the present day was necessarily limited, but appeared to be the best his country could afford, and was quite sufficient for his purpose in after life when he had raised himself to a position



DAVID CATHCART.





of honor and trust in the country of his adoption. At the age of eighteen he enlisted in the yeoman cavalry of the county. His connection with the militia in that corps extended from his enlistment at eighteen until he left the country for Canada, in 1842, at which time he held the rank of sergeant. The yeomen were considered then, and are now, a very important link in the service, and were recruited entirely from land owners and land holders of the county and their sons. Mr. Cathcart, at the age of eighteen, entered the ranks at the earliest time he could be admitted to the somewhat distinguished position of being a Yeoman of the county. His life during the period from eighteen to twenty-eight was passed in the manner in which the average farmer passes his time, sowing and reaping, going to markets and fairs, caring for stock, and regulating the affairs of the state.

At the age of twenty-eight he married Margaret Creighton, sister of the late James Creighton, of the base line, and who afterwards settled on the next lot to Mr. Cathcart, on concession 6, Blanshard. This union was a happy one, and it is safe to say that a kinder, more contented and jovial pair never linked their fortunes to fight the great battle of life. Mr. Cathcart was bluff, honest, not very demonstrative in success, nor apparently much crest-fallen in misfortune; and they had, as is the common lot of all, their share of both. Mrs. Cathcart was affectionate, extremely affable and lively; she was a kind mother, a tidy housekeeper, and had a heart as sympathetic and warm as ever beat in a woman's bosom. She was the average size, well made, and was sprightly and full of mirth up till near the time of her death. Even

during the last years of her life, when suffering from perhaps the severest affliction that can befall humanity (the loss of her sight), she still appeared happy and was never heard to complain. She had unbounded confidence in David, as she always called him, and her countenance seemed to express the deepest anxiety in her dark days, as she appeared to strain her sightless eyes when his friends called on him, to see that they were suitably entertained. She died in the year 1882. After his marriage he began farming on a small farm of his own, and followed that business until he left his native isle with his family, to seek a new home for himself and them in the wilds of Western Canada.

#### LEAVES OLD IRELAND.

An important crisis in his life was now at hand. In the year 1824, John Galt, the Ayrshire novelist, and Captain Dunlop, otherwise known as Tiger Dunlop in the *Noctes Ambrosiana*, and later of the town of Goderich, Upper Canada, had associated themselves with a number of other gentlemen and organized what is known as the Canada Company. A large portion of Western Canada at that period was a complete wilderness. This company obtained from the Crown a grant of a large and fertile section bordering on Lake Huron, and extending easterly and known as the Huron Tract. The greater part of this domain was at once surveyed and offered to actual settlers. Agents were sent everywhere in the old land extolling the salubrity of the climate, the fertility of the soil, and pointing out, as agents only can, that in those pathless wilds any

person who would might soon make a fortune and a home.

Mr. Cathcart had reached that period of life when men delight in adventure and action. His family were growing up around him, and his native Ireland had no grand offerings to give for industry or enterprise. It was hopeless to look for fortune in a land which fortune seemed to have deserted forever. Out of a people who were all poor it was hardly possible for a man ever to get rich. He knew that to get independence he must go where independence was to be got. It did not take him long to decide. The die was soon cast, and May, 1842, saw him leave old Ireland with all his household goods for the new land in the West. After an uneventful voyage of four weeks and two days he arrived at Montreal.

#### REACHES BLANSFARD.

The paternal care of the Canadian government in those early days did not extend to the poor immigrant with that tender solicitude and protecting care that it does now-a-days. There was no provision made for their comfort, nor anyone to give advice. Every person did the best he could and shifted for himself. If he got safely through the hands of designing scoundrels and cheats, who were always in wait at the port of debarkation, so far so good. If he was unwary and got fleeced out of his little store of money, well, he should have taken better care of himself. He was a stranger in a strange land, and was a fair mark for unprincipled operators. Mr. Cathcart was very fortunate on his arrival in meeting Mr. McDonald, who

had previously completed the survey of the township of Blanshard, which was the best and the last surveyed township in the Huron Tract. From the description of the lands in Blanshard, given by Mr. McDonald, Mr. Cathcart decided at once to go there and seek a home.

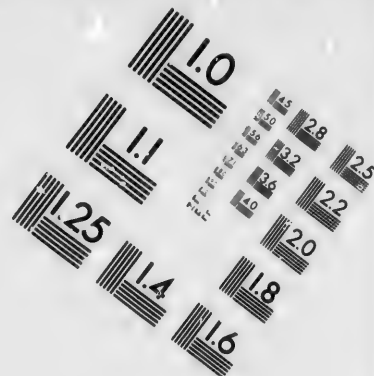
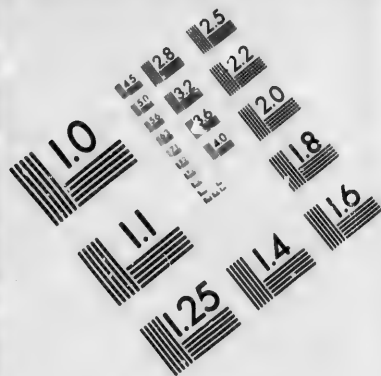
When he reached Toronto the only means of getting up into the western country was by means of hiring teams and plodding on through a region much of which was nearly a wilderness. But onward they came, and on a pleasant evening in the beginning of July reached the township which was to be their future home. Night setting in, they pushed on to Little Falls, or what is now St. Marys, expecting to find shelter till next day. In this they were disappointed. St. Marys was composed of only a few houses, the occupants of which seemed to be no better off than themselves. They could not buy food, for no one had any to sell. It was fortunate that he had a good supply in the wagons, or the whole family would have gone supperless to bed. Still they pushed on out along Queen Street, past Skinner's Corner, where I believe James McKay, of St. Marys, had then located, —past the old Shoebottom place, where one Cameron then lived, and through the unbroken wilderness for several miles, until he reached the object of his hopes, and he stood on the farm which was to be his home so long as he was able for active life. This was lot 18, in concession 6, of Blanshard.

#### THOSE EARLY DAYS.

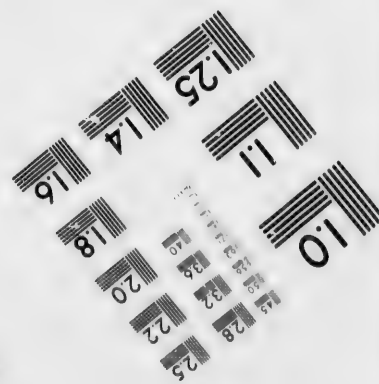
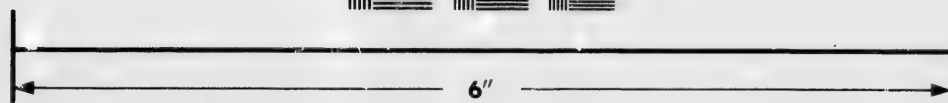
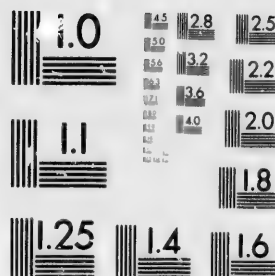
The change from the green hills of Old Ireland to the inhospitable wilds of Western Canada was very great

indeed. The separation from old associations and from friends, never more to meet on this side of eternity, had a most depressing effect. The altars at which they had worshipped and the little plot where the ashes of their fathers reposed were far away. Communications with those left behind were few, and could not be expected in less than three or four months. Neighbors were few and far between. This will be easily understood when the townships of Blanshard, Downie, and Fullarton, at the time Mr. Cathcart came in, only contained one hundred and twenty-three homes. For miles on every side stretched a silent and unbroken wilderness. The old settlers were brave men indeed, and must have had boundless hope in the future of the country ever to brave the trials and hardships of pioneer life. Under the most favorable circumstances they could look forward to nothing but years of hardship and toil. They were the champions of progress, and laid the foundation of a civilization which is the glory of the Canadian people.

But even under all these adverse circumstances they were not without enjoyment. The consciousness that the piece of earth on which they labored would one day be their own, gave them renewed energy for their daily task. Every day saw something done, and some long-looked-for end accomplished. What though they had to work hard? What though the remuneration was small and slow in coming? Come it undoubtedly would; and it was something worth striving for to be the lord of a hundred acres of fertile Canadian soil. And then, too, when the long winter nights had come, what pleasant hours were spent in those old shanties in the



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woods! A great back-log like a tree was carried in and thrown on the fire, which roared and crackled in the old clay fire-place like a lime-kiln, and sent a shower of sparks up around the smoky lug-pole, like a furnace. If the storm raged without, there was happiness within. The presence of a neighbor gave zest to their pleasure, as they talked of the Old Land, the green fields of Ireland, or the heather hills of Scotland, until their hearts were full, and their eyes suffused with tears. After all, those were happy days; we shall never see their like again.

From 1842 to 1855 Mr. Cathcart, like the other pioneers, had employment in clearing his farm, erecting buildings, and putting it in shape generally; and beyond having two or three trips to Goderich on the jury (the only place where court was held in the Huron Tract) did not take a very prominent part in public affairs.

#### ENTERS PUBLIC LIFE.

In the year 1850 the township of Blanshard was separated from Downie, this being the year of the introduction of the Municipal Act. The late T. B. Guest was the first reeve, and held the position till 1853, when he was succeeded by the late Arundell Hill in 1854. In 1855 Mr. Hill was again elected reeve, and we find that David Cathcart was elected deputy. In 1856 David Cathcart was elected reeve. He was again placed in that office in 1857, 1858, and 1859. In 1860 the late John Dunnell was reeve, and David Cathcart deputy. He then retired from public life till 1869, when, after a most spirited contest, he defeated Mr. James Dinsmore. He was again elected

in 1870, and again in 1871, when he resigned and accepted the office of treasurer of the municipality, which position he held for several years. Time was now beginning to tell on him and his energy was not what it had been. The affliction that overtook his wife somewhat unmanned him, and her death in 1882 bore on him with crushing effect. He resigned the office of treasurer, which was the last public position he held. His friends entertained him at a public dinner, at which many of the prominent men of Blanshard and surrounding districts took part.

#### BLANSHARD GRAVEL ROADS.

During the period of his first official connection with the township he took an active part in the scheme of building the London and Proof Line gravel road. This road extended from the Stone Bridge on Queen Street, St. Marys, passing through Prospect Hill, to the Proof Line in London Township; and of this he was inspector for four years. He was also instrumental in building the Base Line road, extending from Shoebottom's corner to the village of Woodham. We can understand the magnitude and utility of these improvements when we consider the state of the roads throughout the municipality—mud and corduroy everywhere. The idea of gravelling all the roads in the township by statute labor had not been thought of then, nor for many years after. It seems surprising that when there was so much diversity of opinion on his gravel road schemes, and particularly in locating the Base Line road (and in this case he met the most determined opposition), he still retained the confidence of the people.

Between 1860 and 1869 the progress of the township had been rapid. Gravel roads made by statute labor were now almost everywhere. Farmers going to market no longer drove on the Base Line or London and Proof line gravel roads where they had to pay toll, when they had made roads themselves which were as good. As a consequence an agitation was at once begun to buy the roads in Blanshard from the companies, take off the toll-gates, and keep them in repair from the township funds. This agitation led to the struggle between Mr. Cathcart and Mr. James Dinsmore in 1869. Mr. Cathcart was elected, and at once bought all the stock in the London and Proof Line gravel road (except what was held by the county, which was given to the township free) and at once removed the toll-gates off this road. The conduct of Mr. Cathcart in this transaction led to most important and far-reaching results a few years later, under the reeveship of Mr. James Dinsmore. The Base Line road was bought by Mr. David Brethour when he occupied the reeve's chair in 1873, when the last toll-gate was removed.

#### TRAINING DAY.

The first time we ever saw Mr. Cathcart was on what was known as training day—the twenty-fourth day of May, 1860. A short description of this ridiculous obligation of Canadian citizenship imposed on them by the government may not be uninteresting.

The militia at that period was organized on an entirely different basis from what it is at the present. All able-bodied men between the ages of twenty-one and sixty

years had to attend at a certain point and receive instructions in the art of war one day in the year. For this purpose the loyal and patriotic Canadians had selected the twenty-fourth of May, Her Majesty's birthday. An officer of the force, a few days previous, had sent out orders to all the men liable to bear arms to muster on the flats at St. Marys and perform their annual drill. That day we remember well. It was beautiful but exceedingly hot. Horses were few, and most of the men made the journey on foot, many of them walking ten or twelve miles through the woods and over dusty roads to the place of rendezvous.

Groups of strong, able, happy fellows could be seen wending their way along the concession lines and through forests, then one mass of foliage, to the place of meeting. On nearing the London and Proof Line gravel road, which crosses at right angles the various concession lines, the spirits of the pedestrians seemed to rise in proportion as the distance decreased to the various places of refreshment which were located on that oldest thoroughfare in the township, there being no fewer than six or seven hotels between Prospect Hill and St. Marys. Considering the great heat, the fatigue of the journey, and the importance of the duties of the day, it is not surprising that the potations at the various hostleries were frequent and copious. This produced an exhilaration of spirits in some, which, by the time we reached St. Marys, had passed the hilarious stage of excitement and was fast merging into the uproarious. On reaching the old bridge over the Thames on Queen Street, we noticed that a large concourse of people had assembled on the flats, and the various evolutions of the troops were about to begin.

On all the leading roads converging into the town, travel-stained and dusty men were pouring in.

On crossing the bridge over the mill race, opposite the planing mill, as we entered the flats, several of the officers were chatting. All were on foot except one, who, we were informed, was Colonel Sparling, the officer in command. He was mounted on a feeble steed, over whose venerable head there appeared to have passed the snows since George III. was king. It was like all mortality, fearfully and wonderfully made. A heavy ration of straw in the winter, followed by a soft ration of grass in the spring, had increased the abdominal region out of all proportion to the other parts of its organism. On this ancient specimen sat Colonel Sparling, the commander-in-chief, and whose short, thick-set limbs stuck straight out on each side like the arms of a capstan. The Colonel appeared to give no orders to any of his officers, but surveyed the field in quiet dignity.

At last our name was called by an officer at some distance on the flats, and we at once proceeded to fall into the ranks. This officer was a middle-aged, nimble looking man of average size, his head well set back, large chest and full heart, and a pair of limbs that suggested strength, activity, and the greatest powers of endurance. He appeared to be the only officer that knew anything at all about military terms or manœuvres, and, as a matter of course, directed the men through the various drills. This was Mr. Cathcart. Another officer stood near him who, we were informed, was Lieutenant James Dinsmore. The experience that Mr. Cathcart had gained in the yeomanry in Ireland stood him now in

good stead. In Enniskillen, in Armagh, and in Londonderry, bodies of British troops were always stationed, at whose drill he had often been a spectator, if not a participant, which gave him a knowledge of military terms, as well as some of the simpler movements practised in the regular army.

We were at last ordered to fall into line. Our left rested at the bridge, near the Colonel, and our right extended up to and parallel with the mill race. A more motley and awkward line of warriors one could hardly conceive. We had not the smart uniforms our volunteers are at present privileged to wear. Every one of us was dressed as seemed right in his own eyes. Some of the North of Ireland men had plug hats, bought in Donegal or Londonderry, with black broadcloth coats, made claw-hammer fashion, garnished and ornamented with rows of brass buttons in front and at the peaks of the tails in rear. Others, less pretentious, had encased themselves in blue cotton goods, wearing the ordinary straw hats, while one gentleman had heavy winter garments, and his pericranium covered with a high crowned hat, amply ornamented with squirrel tails. But though we were uncouth and awkward, let no man for a moment think that in that thin, awkward line there was nothing but clowns. In the faces of those men were deep, thoughtful lines, evidences of strong character. Many of them never knew fear. Possessed of sturdy independence, determined and resolute, they had braved the dangers and possibilities of a long voyage across the sea, and with a heroism that cannot be overpraised, struck into the interminable forest and hewed out for themselves independence and a home. If Mr. Cath-

cart were to stand on the spot to-day on which he stood on that 24th of May, and call the roll again, how many of those jovial fellows could respond to their names? Alas! how many? Perhaps a half dozen. Nearly all are gone. Some have left and found homes elsewhere, but by far the greatest number have answered the roll call of a greater commander than Mr. Cathcart, and joined the silent ranks of the great majority.

#### A LUDICROUS INCIDENT.

At length the order was given, "Attention! Stand at ease!" and for the next hour or two we wheeled, we marched and countermarched, shouldered arms, grounded arms, and performed many intricate movements, which must have convinced the spectators, if the opportunity offered, that we were the lads that could show them how fields were won.

Hitherto we had been executing the simpler movements, when the order was given by Mr. Cathcart for the most difficult manœuvre of the day. This was to effect a change of front. Our left rested at the bridge over the mill race, where the Colonel still maintained his position, and our right at a stump near the Sarnia Bridge, the line being parallel with the race. Our right was ordered to swing around and take a position at right angles to that which it had before. Precautions were taken to guide the troops through this movement as orderly as possible. At a short distance from the stump on which our right rested, a barrel had been set up as a mark to guide the advancing column, and farther on still Lieutenant Dinsmore was stationed as the



point at which our right should rest, having described about one-fourth of a circle. We accordingly began to move, but before we had gone very far it was painfully evident that we were not going to be successful ; indeed we had got into the greatest confusion, which was heightened by an incident on our left. A soldier, then residing on the 10th con. of Blanshard, and who was somewhat of a wag in his day, had gathered some grass and quietly fastened it to one of the brass buttons of the claw-hammer coat which we have already mentioned. In the course of the last movement the innocent wearer of the garment had to pass close to the Colonel's steed, which no doubt thought that the grass was intended as a peace-offering for its usual ration, and reached out and seized it. In doing so it unfortunately caught the button at the same time and held on. This led to most disastrous results. A hungry horse at one end, a swearing Irishman at the other, the *piece de resistance* the tail of a claw-hammer coat. The issue was not long in doubt. The coat tail gave way, and so forever was destroyed the mercantile value of a coat which the knights of the needle had admired as the triumph of the art. The fun arising out of this incident abruptly brought the duties of the day to a close, and Mr. Cathcart, seeing the state of affairs and the attitude of some of the troops around the Colonel, proposed three cheers for the Queen, which were loyally given. He also informed the men that he had ordered refreshments for all who were in the ranks. This was followed by prolonged cheering, to which that given for Her Majesty was but a trifle.



## CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE.

Mr. Cathcart in personal appearance was an excellent representation of an old country squire, the fine old country gentleman, all of the olden time. He was robust looking, strongly built, and his face in every lineament expressed open-heartedness, kindness, and generosity. No more generous person ever lived. That was a trait in his character no one could appeal to in vain, and, as might be expected, he was often victimized by cunning and designing suppliants. He was even tempered and good natured, although if exasperated beyond a certain point, particularly if unfairly accused of a mean or dishonest action, his resentment was sudden and emphatic, and usually had the effect of moderating the statements of his opponent. Blanshard never had, perhaps, a public man who enjoyed more the confidence of the people throughout his whole public career than did Mr. Cathcart. He had not obtained this good-will by pandering to any party or clique, as most politicians usually do. Neither did he know the art of blazoning the failings and short-comings of his opponents continually before the people and religiously keeping back any good qualities they might possess, and thereby raising himself into prominence on the wreck and ruin of other men's reputations. His position as a public man was particularly his own, and arose from that noble appreciation by all men of genuine honesty and integrity of heart. As a public speaker he was not more than average, but what he did say was clear, forcible, and to the point. As an illustration of this, on one occasion when a political contest was being held previous to a parliamentary election, one of the candi-

dates made a long speech, at the close of which an elector jumped up and said that two minutes from Cathcart would have had more effect than all his long harangue. He has been a life-long and uncompromising Conservative, but is neither blatant nor offensive in advocacy of those principles which he believed were for the best interest of his adopted country. He has always been a consistent supporter of the Methodist Church, although he has never taken a very prominent part in the management of ecclesiastical affairs. He was not pharasaical in his mode of living, and did not occupy the highest seat in the synagogue, thanking God that he was not as other men are. He never preached religion—he did better, he lived it.

Mr. Cathcart might, if he had been desirous, have had a much larger share of this world's goods ; but saving money was not his forte. Indeed had he come to this country with a fortune it is doubtful if he would have kept it. The whole disposition of the man was clearly against the hoarding of money. His kindly, social feeling prompted him to spend freely ; and during nearly a half century of active life I have never known that he at any time had recourse to harsh measures for the collection of a debt.

His tastes were simple. About his work on the farm, he was very methodical. In his intercourse with men he was affable and kind. Nothing gave him so much pleasure as to have his friends and neighbors share his hospitality. Away back in the forties, when the township about where he lived was a wilderness, many a poor, hungry family found food and shelter in his shanty for the night. He was always amply rewarded in such cases by the happiness suffusing the

hearts of the poor pioneers when they left in the morning to pursue their way through the dark forest to some quiet, lonely spot, there to make a home. He was always neat in his attire, but never gaudy. His manner was simplicity itself. Affectation he had none; what he appeared to be he was in reality. He was fond of a good horse, and, as a natural consequence, took considerable pride in driving a fine animal.

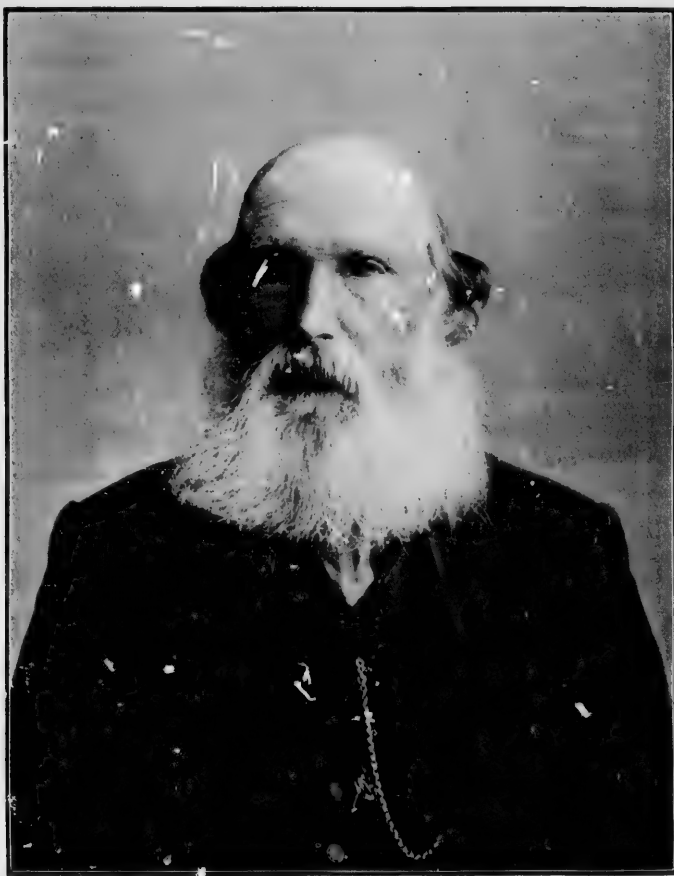
The old gentleman has long since passed the allotted span of three score years and ten; nay, he has long passed that period which some by reason of mere strength are said to attain. Those men with whom he labored are nearly all gone, and he stands, at the age of ninety-three years, all alone, a relic of the past generation.

Mr. Cathcart had a family of nine, of whom three are deceased. James died in Ireland; Helen, (Mrs. Bobier) in Blanshard; and Frances Ann, (Mrs. Pratt) in Winnipeg. The surviving members are Henry, residing on the 8th concession Blanshard; Catherine, (Mrs. Somerville) of Brussels; Elizabeth, (Mrs. Bobier) in Manitoba; David, in British Columbia; Margaret, (Mrs. St. John) St. Marys; and John W., of the Garnet House, St. Marys.

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CAPTAIN JOHN CAMPBELL.

## CHAPTER VII.

## CAPTAIN JOHN CAMPBELL:

**I**N the group of beautiful islands that lie west of the mainland of Argyle, and which attract tourists from every corner of the world, is the island of Jura. Inconsiderable in itself, it seems to nestle in the bosom of its more pretentious neighbor, the island of Islay. Away to the west rise lonely and weird-like Colonsay and Oronsay, on whose beetling cliffs dash the wild waves of the Atlantic Ocean, that roll without interruption from the icy hills of Greenland. On the mainland there looms up the scalp of the lofty Ben Lomond, and farther north, above Loch Awe, rise the hills round the dreary vale of Glencoe, where the perfidious Breadalbane satisfied his unrelenting vengeance by the perpetration of the most vile atrocity that ever disgraced any age or country. West of Glencoe are the silent solitudes of Morven, and near which is Moidart, where Bonnie Prince Charlie, of ill-starred fate, raised his standard in 1745, to fight for the crown of Auld Scotland, the heritage of his fathers. Close to the mainland here is the island of Iona, said to be the point at which Christianity was first introduced into Scotland, and whose ruined temples stand as silent memorials of the destroying hand of time, and

the evanescence of all earthly things. Such are the surroundings of the little island of Jura, where the subject of this sketch was born on the 18th day of October, 1821. Mr. Campbell, or, as he is better known, Capt. Campbell, was the son of a farmer who, in connection with the operations on his farm, managed or acted as overseer on a larger holding occupied by the Laird. In this capacity his transactions in buying and selling of cattle and sheep were considerable, and led him in the course of his business to the markets on the mainland, where the confidence reposed in him by the Laird for his honesty and integrity allowed him free scope in the disposal of the goods. In the ordinary course of things, Mr. Campbell would likely have grown up and finally settled as a shepherd or small farmer in his native Jura, but the death of his father left him to some extent a free agent in choosing his own occupation in life. Mr. Campbell being only ten years old at the time of the death of his father, the widowed mother still kept the farm and managed to care for and educate her son, who was her only child, till he attained the age of seventeen. No son ever had a more kind and loving mother to watch over him than Mr. Campbell.

After the death of her husband her whole affections seemed to twine around him, and she was untiring in ministering to his comfort and the happiness of his family. And well did Mr. Campbell repay her for her kindness. No mother ever received more affectionate care and treatment from a son than she did from him. No matter whether he resided in a luxurious home in the city, or dwelt in the log shanty, a cozy spot was reserved for her. His conduct to her was most hon-

orable to his head and creditable to his heart. It is therefore not too much to say that he, or any other man that shelters a mother in her widowhood, fulfils the highest attribute of the divine teaching, and whatever his life may be as to faults and failings, the world must be the better of his having lived.

At the age of seventeen Mr. Campbell decided to try his fortune in Canada. Up to this period he had been attending school and giving what assistance he could to his mother on the farm. The island only contained two schools, so that he had not much choice of teachers. But the parochial system introduced into Scotland by John Knox, the great reformer, supplied to the youth of that country a high standard of education. Mr. Campbell had availed himself of this, so much so that when he came to Canada he at once commenced teaching.

In the early summer of 1838 Mr. Campbell, accompanied by his mother, left his native land, she never to see it again, and he not till nearly fifty years had passed away. It was a brave undertaking to leave his friends and acquaintances and cast his lot among strangers in a distant land. But hope is ever high in the youthful breast. That buoyancy of heart which is peculiar to the young leads them on to dare all circumstances and surmount difficulties which, in after years, would appear to be insurmountable. The voyage from Glasgow to Quebec lasted for ten weeks. In those days the accommodation for the comfort and safety of the passengers was deplorable. It is not to be wondered at if the sorrowing friends left behind, as, with tears in their eyes, they sobbed a last farewell, would rather have seen the departing ones going to their



graves. But it is said that fortune favors the brave. After the period of three months Mr. Campbell had reached the end of his hopes and was settled in the township of Darlington. He at once applied for and obtained a school, but the teaching of a school in the backwoods of Canada did not accord with his feelings. To a youth of his aspirations there was not much prospect of advancement in a country school. Honorable as the occupation undoubtedly is, it offered no prize for an ambitious youth. To be shut up day after day, grinding through the routine of lessons with a few small children in a little log school-house in the bush, did not harmonize very well with the feelings of one who from his youth had roamed among the hills and dales of the Western Highlands. There he was free as the air of his native mountain; here his duty had to be done, so long as he retained his position, in doing what he could for the little ones committed to his care. His first year was his last one in the profession, and he laid aside the taws, turning his back upon the blackboard never again to return. He was now completing his nineteenth year and naturally desired a wider sphere for his ambition. In his island home he had been accustomed from his very infancy to look on the sea. He was familiar with the ocean in all its various moods. He had seen it raging like a lion and casting its white foam up to the very door of the cottage where he dwelt, and he had seen it calm as a sleeping child. For him a storm had no terrors, and a calm was simply monotony. He determined therefore to go to sea, and from this time his active life may be said to have begun.

At the age of nineteen Mr. Campbell bade adieu to

his friends and commenced his apprenticeship as a sailor. It is said "there is no royal road to learning;" so there was no royal road for him to a captaincy on the inland seas of his adopted country. He began his career at the bottom of the ladder, and worked his way step by step to the top. As a deck hand he had to perform the menial labor of a deck hand. He had no powerful interest at his back to push him ahead. Whatever he accomplished in his new occupation he had to do it himself. The position of a common sailor at that time did not entitle him to much regard. His employers merely looked on him as something that they could use for a consideration and at the end of the season cast it off. There was only one way in which he could hope to succeed (and this will apply to all young men starting life), and that was by honestly discharging his duties and by taking such interest in the business of his employers as to render himself necessary to the successful carrying out of their speculations. This Mr. Campbell did with a will and hearty endeavor that at once drew the attention of those whose duty it was to watch over his conduct. At the end of his first year before the mast his efforts in the interest of the owners merited such appreciation that he was offered the command of a vessel for the next season. This offer he declined. He did not consider that in the short space of one year he had sufficiently mastered the details of his business to assume the command of a vessel. He returned to Darlington to his mother's home for the winter. The next year he returned to his post again before the mast, and served the season with great acceptance to his employers, so much so that he was offered and accepted

the position of mate. During the few years he had been on deck, with the characteristic frugality of his nation, he had saved his earnings. When at the age of twenty-five years he received the appointment on the ship *Minerva*, he bought an interest in this vessel, on which he held the command for three years.

The Province of Ontario was being settled rapidly at this time, both in the centre and in the west, which greatly increased the trade from the various ports on Lake Ontario. To accommodate this increased traffic the Canadian Government decided to make certain improvements in the harbors between Toronto and Kingston. The conduct of Mr. Campbell had attracted the attention of the authorities, and he was offered and accepted the position of superintendent of the survey and deepening the harbor at Cobourg. He at once gave up the captaincy on the *Minerva* and entered on his duties as manager of the Cobourg harbor improvements. He continued in this service until the work was completed and a channel dredged to deep water with such skill and care that it has required but little attention ever since.

At the completion of this work he removed to Colborne, on Lake Ontario. Here he superintended the building of the ship *Trade Wind*, in which craft he also had an interest. This vessel is still afloat. He was appointed captain and sailed her for one year. It is important to note here that no Canadian ship had ever sailed to Chicago, which was then being spoken of as a point of some importance on Lake Michigan. Nearly all the trading with the few ships owned in Ontario at that time was done between Buffalo, Oswego, Kingston, and intermediate ports on Lake

Ontario. The vast country away to the north and west was still a wilderness. Except a few brave adventurers, no white man had penetrated very far into the prairie solitudes, which are to-day the garden of America. During the few years that Mr. Campbell sailed before the mast he made several trips to Chicago and Milwaukee on American vessels, but never on a Canadian. The honor of first sailing into Chicago under the British flag was to be his own, as will be noticed later on. After leaving this vessel the Captain's next appointment was to the command of the *Water Witch*, which at that time was owned in Buffalo, by an American gentleman of somewhat eccentric character. This appointment he looks upon as one of the strange events in his life. He is somewhat of a fatalist in his opinions. He thinks with Hamlet "That there are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamed of in thy philosophy."

On a wild and stormy season, about the middle of November, Mr. Campbell was in the city of Buffalo. It was near the close of navigation on the lakes, and ships were fast making for their winter quarters. He was sick and confined to his bed in a hotel frequented by the sailors and captains navigating the lakes. One evening a gentleman called and asked the proprietor if among the seamen at his house he could get one to go with him to Chicago. Several men presented themselves, but were not suitable. On further questioning, the proprietor of the hotel informed him that there was only one hand he had not seen, and he was sick in his room. The gentleman went to the room where Mr. Campbell lay, and at once pronounced him to be the very man he was looking for. Although never

having seen each other before, it was arranged that the ship should not sail for a couple of days till he would be well enough to go aboard. In a day or two they sailed, the owner of the ship in command. The weather was rough and the lake seemed to be swept to its very depths by a terrific storm. As evening came on the wind grew more wild and increased in fury. A long, dark night was fast settling down on the troubled waters. Great seas swept over the deck and threatened every moment to suck her down to destruction with all on board. The Captain was incapable, and appeared helpless when the fate of all on board depended to a considerable extent on his judgment. The gale was still increasing. The rolling of the ship and the water rushing over her decks made it dangerous for the men to attend to any duty. The Captain at last asked if any one on board could take the vessel through the channel to which they were fast approaching. All declined, when Mr. Campbell informed him that he had passed through the channel several times when a deck hand, but never as commander. Mr. Campbell was at once put in command of the ship. The steersman was ordered to steer according as he directed. At this part of the lake there are two channels, one on the American and the other on the Canadian side. The Canadian one, though narrower, he considered safer. He gave directions to steer for the Canadian side. It was now dark, and the gale was apparently increasing. The sound of the rushing waters as they dashed on the ship, and the wind whistling in the cordage of the masts, made it almost impossible for orders to be heard. On this occasion Mr. Campbell says he trembled as he stood at his post.

It was the only time in his life as a sailor that he ever knew fear. But he had to do his duty, and his duty he did like a man. The safety of the ship and all the lives on board were committed to his charge. As he stood at the watch his garments were soaked with water and the night was cold. But on they plunged through the darkness and the tumultuous waters. At length the grey dawn began to brighten in the east, and he found that the danger was past as they slowly entered the Detroit River. When they arrived at Chicago the owner of the ship gave instructions to him to fit her up to suit himself and sail her where he pleased. Thus he became Captain of the *Water Witch*, whose deck was his home till he left the lakes for a farm in Blanshard. He accordingly returned to Canada, refitted the ship, hoisted the British flag, sailed from Kingston to Chicago with a cargo of Liverpool salt for Mr. Armour, the great speculator of the west. This then is the first occasion on which the British flag was ever seen in the Chicago river, flying from the masts of a Canadian ship. While he was in port Mr. Armour drove him out to his pork-packing establishment, which was then considerable and formed the nucleus of the vast business of the present. In the course of his little trip Mr. Campbell noticed a number of excrescences on Mr. Armour's hands, which the vulgar people call warts. The Captain, no doubt, in his younger days had heard and read of Esculapius, but whether he knew anything of the compounds of lard and smut prepared by that ancient practitioner for the cure of these things, history sayeth not. This, however, history doth say, that he applied a charm known only to himself, (it was in Gaelic),

and on his next visit to Chicago Mr. Armour presented himself on the ship with hands as smooth and white as a rector's. The cure was complete. But there being no cordwood in that Prairie City to reward the new disciple of Galen, Mr. Armour's gratitude for such happy results took the shape of a barrel of pork.

There is yet another incident we must relate in connection with this voyage. Being in port at Kingston, Mr. Campbell was introduced to a gentleman from England, Mr. J. Edward Wilkins. This gentleman was of good family, but reduced in circumstances. He afterwards made several trips on Mr. Campbell's ship to ports on the lower Lakes. On this occasion he came with him as far as Chicago. At that time there was no British Consul in the city, and he experienced much difficulty, as the master of a foreign vessel, in getting his papers to trade in a foreign port. Mr. Wilkins became aware of this fact and informed him that if he would state all the difficulties in connection therewith, he would memorialize the British Government to appoint a consul at this point. Mr. Campbell accordingly drew up a paper setting forth the whole case, which Mr. Wilkins put in proper form and sent to the Old Country. Mr. Wilkins seems to have had influence enough with some of the members of the government in London to insure prompt attention to the memorial. A few months later an answer came to Mr. Wilkins acknowledging the receipt of the papers and also another document appointing him as the first British Consul in the city. Thus Mr. Campbell has not only the honor of sailing the first ship carrying British colors into Chicago, but also the honor of being instrumental in the appointment of the first British Consul. We



have thus followed him from the period of his teaching in the little log school in the backwoods up to the distinguished place he then held as one of the most competent and painstaking masters sailing on the Great Lakes.

#### HIS MARRIAGE.

We must now return in our narrative to a period some years prior to those occurrences which we have related. There are events transpiring in the life of every man the effects of which sometimes change the whole course of events, and give a different coloring to his future conduct. Almost every man who has reached the three score, in looking back over his career will be able to point to such, that stand like milestones on his track, and by which he sums up his existence, rather than by those mechanical methods introduced by civilized nations for the computation of time. From one of these points we will again proceed with this sketch. On the 22nd of December, 1848, Mr. Campbell was united in marriage to Margaret McDougall, the daughter of a farmer in Darlington. It is presumable that this lady was one of his former pupils, when he taught the school in the woods. She was several years his junior, being 18 years old, Mr. Campbell being 26. After his marriage he removed to Kingston, where he resided for some years. Mrs. Campbell, although having lived all her life on a farm, was a good sailor and made a number of trips with her husband, going as far west as Chicago. But city life had no charms for her. She still was anxious to return to the farm. Mr. Campbell, though still young, was threatened with failing health. The exposure arising from the nature of his calling began to tell on him. He felt that to stay on the deck much



longer was to incur a serious risk. A young family was growing up around him, and the solicitations of his wife, added to those of his mother, finally influenced him to leave his chosen occupation and go to a farm. To decide with him was to act. He sold off his household goods, and early in the fifties came into the Township of Blanshard. He had paid a visit to the township in 1843, when it was a wilderness, and located what was afterwards the Dawson farm, but failed to complete the arrangements and thereby lost the property. During his visit in 1843 he was so much impressed with the country that as soon as he determined to live on the farm, he at once came to Blanshard.

#### COMING TO BLANSHARD.

Near the top of the hill that rises from the banks of Fish Creek there stood in the early fifties a shanty in the centre of a small clearing. This was on lot 6, in the 9th concession. Into this humble dwelling he removed his household goods. The change must have been very great indeed to one who had followed his mode of life. This man who had been the first to carry the flag of his country into the new centre of the west, and who was instrumental in having a consul appointed to facilitate the transaction of business between the two countries, must have had more than an ordinary share of philosophy to submit to such a change. But he had seen what had been accomplished in the older settlements. He had seen the shanty give place to a home, if not of luxury, at least of comfort. He had seen men on the farm, after the great fight with nature was over, spend their remaining years on the fertile

acres they had hewed from the forest, in ease and contentment. What had been done by one in this manner another might accomplish. He determined to try. It will be easily understood that Mr. Campbell would be greatly handicapped in his efforts at clearing a farm or carrying out the details of farm management. But he was nobly supported by his wife. There was no detail of the farm with which she was not conversant. Margaret, as he called her, was always consulted, and it was well for him that he usually acted as she advised. She was master of every piece of farm work, either indoors or out of doors. She was a great worker in the field, in the dairy, and in the stable. Slightly built and wiry looking, she appeared never to be fatigued. It is not too much to say that the proprietor of "Stewart Castle" owes much of the comfort and luxurious belongings of his present condition to the untiring energy and industry of his wife. His new farm had to be cleared, however, and he started with a will. He had the honor of raising the first frame barn in that part of the township. Every winter a fallow was chopped down; then logged and fenced the next summer. He was a prosperous man. He had cattle in the yard, hogs in the pen, and, what was then a rare thing in that part of the township, horses in the stable. These horses were for several years the plague of his life. He fed them well, and being of nervous temperament, they were difficult to manage. It was one of the sights of a lifetime to see him after Dan and Jim, as he called them, plowing a new, stumpy field with a shovel plow. They went like deer over knolls, through hollows, round big stumps, Mr. Campbell holding on to the handles like grim death. Here and there he would catch on

a big root, which would fly back and strike him on the shin with terrible force. This would provoke an outpouring of the spirit in words which separately and by themselves were not unscriptural, but he had the faculty of placing them in such combinations as are not taught in Sunday-schools.

#### FIRST LOG RAISING.

It is now nearly forty years since we met at Mr. Campbell's place to raise his first log building. This building still stands, a monument to the skill and handiwork of the old pioneers. It was a delightful morning, about the beginning of April. The frost of the previous night was fast giving way before a hot sun that shone from a cloudless sky. Here and there in the still woods one could see the curling smoke rise from the various sugar camps where the supply of sweets was being made for the summer. Along the concessions and side-roads and emerging from the woods, men could be seen coming to assist in the raising. On our arrival our attention was first attracted by the kindly salutation of the grog boss, who was already on the ground with a teacup and an immense jug of what was recommended as the pure stuff. All the hands took what was called a "corker," to relieve the fatigue of the walking. A "corker" was never taken except in the morning. The potations indulged in during the day were called "a wee tint," which being interpreted meant "a half cupful." The corner men were now in their places and sharpening their axes ready to lay down the logs as they came up. The "togglers" were preparing the toggling-timber for the doors. The oxen were hauling the "skids" and the

"mulley's." Handspikes were being got ready, the short skids peeled and mulleys pinned and tied at the forked end. At last a great log was hauled by the oxen in front of the foundation and across the bottom of the skids. Then the noise began. The shouting, the yelling, and hurraing could be heard far away in the woods. Every man lifted all he could and shouted all he could. Babel was but a trifle to the noise and confusion at the raising of a log building. Here you could hear the voice of an Irishman shouting "tear-anages! send her up or smash her!" Again you would hear the snort of a Yorkshireman counselling milder measures than "smashing her." There could be heard a volley of Gaelic from a champion from the braes of Strathpieffer, while away above the din, in a shrill treble voice, an old son of the heather yelled, "chairge her! hoo the diel dinna yae chairge her?" At last the log reached the "corner men," who placed it in position with a dexterity truly marvellous. So we followed round the building till the first round was in place. The sun had now taken effect on the frozen ground, and the mud was almost without bottom. At length the noon hour arrived, when helter-skelter all hands started for the shanty. At that time the hog supplied the only animal food that was used among the old settlers. A glance at the walls of Mr. Campbell's dwelling showed that he had made ample provision for the family. Great hams and sides of pork hung everywhere. On the tables for the men was pork fried, pork roasted, and pork boiled. There was pork in slices, pork in whangs, and pork in chunks; mashed potatoes by the peck, and great pyramids of sliced bread were piled here on the board and flanked by

several bottles of the "pure stuff." All this was the sort of food for men who, every day of their lives, had to undergo the severest physical toil. As the supplies on the board disappeared fresh augmentations were brought from side tables and placed in position, which in turn were demolished with promptness and despatch, affording the strongest proof of the palatability of the viands, and the unappeasable appetite of the guests. But it is possible to satisfy even a hungry pioneer, and the men returned to complete the work of finishing the building, all happy and pleased with themselves.

#### PERSONAL TRAITS.

Mr. Campbell, during his long period of nearly fifty years' residence in Blanshard, has never taken a very active part in the public affairs of the municipality. Had he been so disposed he might have filled the highest offices in the gift of the people. But he was rather of a retiring disposition and never courted popularity. In all the questions that have come before the people of the township he always took part in the discussion in connection with them, but left their final settlement to other men. He was township assessor for one year, and on presentation of his roll received a vote of thanks from the Council for the best roll that up to that time had ever been given to the Board. He also filled the office of auditor for over twenty years, which was always conferred on him without being asked. He is a most hospitable man, and "Stewart Castle" is widely known for its generous and kind treatment of his many friends or of the stranger that may come within its gates. He is a most intense Jacobite and reveres the memories of the ill-fated Stuart. He

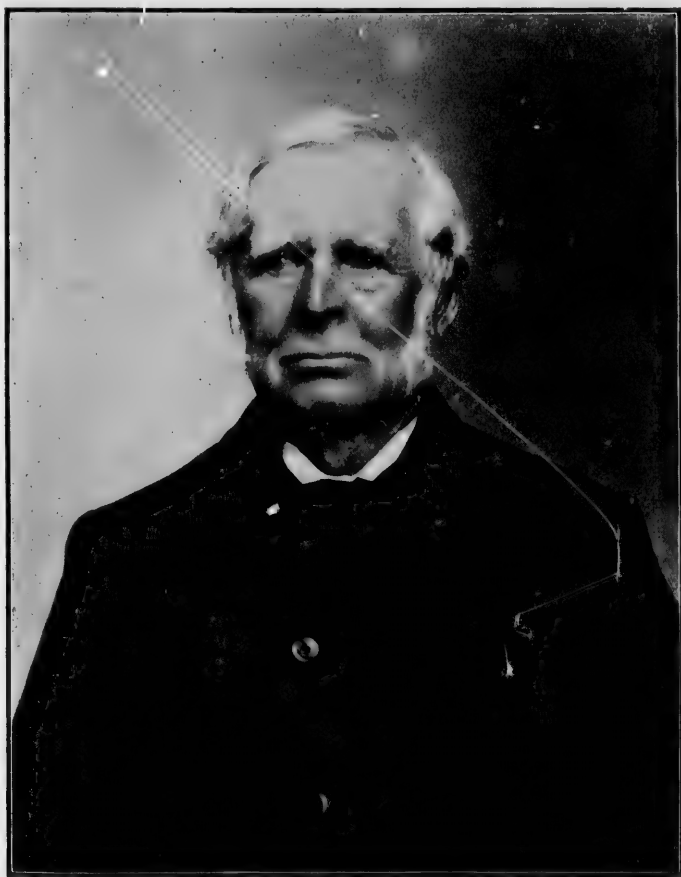
glories in the fact that after the annihilation of their hopes on the field of Culloden, no one among his famishing and persecuted countrymen could be found to sell the blood of poor unfortunate Prince Charles. The pitiable story of Mary Stuart, her splendor and her misfortunes, always excites his deepest feelings. The thought of the cruelties and indignities to which she was subjected by her persecutors rouse his strongest execrations. He seems to lose faith in the divine plan for building up the brotherhood of man, when it has to be cemented by the blood of the noble and the brave, and the tears of the helpless and broken hearted. He is passionately fond of music, and particularly the songs of his native country. As a performer, our regard for truth forbids us giving him a high place. His masterpiece is "Burns and his Highland Mary," and his rendering of that melody is such that we could not recommend any person to go far to hear it. In the musical line this was always his highest and last flight, and I believe his audiences were always glad of it. As a dancer, even at the age of nearly fourscore years, he is perfect, and his performances are such as to excite the most fervent admiration of the devotees of the terpsichorean art. In politics he has been a life-long Reformer, but is not obtrusive with his opinions, rarely speaking about political matters. He is an adherent of the Presbyterian Church, but takes no active part in the affairs of religion.

In personal appearance, thirty-five years ago, when he was at his best, he was strong and robust looking, about average height, deep chested, straight, and well proportioned. He is kindly in his family, although not at all demonstrative in his affections. He is most hon-

orable in all his relations with his fellowmen. He is a true Scotchman, and glories in the success of auld Scotia's sons. But we must now close this imperfect sketch of the life of Captain John Campbell. In doing so we can heartily endorse the kindly feelings expressed by his numerous friends at his golden wedding, on the 22nd of December last. We therefore, in common with all his well-wishers, trust that he may be long spared to toddle around "Stewart Castle," and that the evening of his life may calmly glide away into the sunset, when the grim reaper comes forth to gather in the sheaves.

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SAMUEL RADCLIFF.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SAMUEL RADCLIFF.

I N every age men and women have been given to the world, the phases of whose character have been of a nature so heroic and transcendent as to challenge the admiration of succeeding generations. It is certainly indicative of goodness among men, that the pure, the unselfish and the philanthropic command our highest esteem, and, by universal consent, these names are written on the scroll of fame as being worthy of our emulation. We instinctively gather around such characters, and if we do not stoop to hero worship, we accord them a place in our affections, separate and distinct from the great mass of mankind. By our conduct in cherishing a warm remembrance of their actions, we furnish the most positive proof of our belief that they have done something towards lifting to a higher plane our common humanity. No one can look at the life of Howard without being permeated to some extent by the far-reaching sympathy of one who spent a life and a fortune to improve the condition of the unfortunate and the helpless in the prisons of Europe. Lying under the ban though they were, for offences against the laws of their country, still they were human, and the expiation of their crimes by the loss of their liberty too often

ended in the loss of their lives. But he alone stood up in their behalf, and the world is better that he lived.

The ever-to-be-remembered story of Grace Darling exhibits a phase of character which could only have been the growth of the purest unselfishness and the warmest devotion to the duty she conceived to be owing to her fellow-creatures.

On the 6th day of September, 1838, a terrific storm was raging over the Farne Islands. The sea was running mountains high in mad tumultuousness around the lighthouse where she resided, and rushing on in foaming fury, was dashed into fragments on the beetling cliffs along the shore. Through the darkness of that terrible night, and above the roar of the waters, she heard the despairing cry for help from the hopeless crew of the ill-fated ship *Forfar* that lay a sinking wreck at the mercy of the waves. At daybreak she saw at the distance of about a mile the perishing crew still clinging to the wreck.

She thought not of the stormy sea ; she thought not of the danger among the white capped waves ; she thought not of home where she might have remained secure ; she thought only of the perishing sailors, and launching her boat she proceeded to the rescue, and brought them to a place of safety. We love to dwell on such intrepid actions as these, but at the same time we should not forget that in every stage of society men have been born with perhaps as wide sympathy as Howard, and women with as dauntless courage as Grace Darling. Men and women all move in a little world of their own, and we venture to say that before the three-score is reached (no matter in what

sphere our lot has been cast) many things have come under our observation which could only spring from great hearts full of kindness and consideration for their fellowmen.

There is perhaps no condition of existence in this country where the heroic qualities and feelings of sympathy could find greater scope than in the lives of the early settlers. The difficulties arising from their situation had the effect of developing the best traits in their character. The inconveniences to which they were subjected were common to all. Their isolations and their hardships formed amongst them a strong bond of union, and wherever sympathy and help was required, sympathy and help was always freely given. That spirit of rivalry which obtains at the present did not exist in the early days of Blanshard pioneers. When all were poor, no feeling of envy could be stirred up by contrast with those who were rich. The struggle in which they were engaged and their helpless condition cemented together the families that were scattered here and there in the forest. Rude and unpolished in their manners they may have been, but there was that within them which served as a basis on which has been raised our present civilization. It is gratifying to know that some of those men who fought the battle of life in the early days have had their labors crowned with success, and are spending the evening of life in comfort and a well-earned rest.

Of the few that are remaining of the original settlers (there are not more than ten or twelve now alive in the township) is Mr. Samuel Radcliff, on lot 25, in the 10th concession of Blanshard. Mr. Radcliff, the subject of the present sketch, was born in Castlemillan,

near Belfast, County Down, Ireland, in December, 1820. The family was originally from Cumberland, on the borders of England, and emigrated to Ireland along with large numbers of the Scotch, under the colonization scheme of James I. Like the greater portion of the settlers from the north of Ireland, he was the son of a farmer. Unlike, however, the bulk of his countrymen who came to Canada about that time and settled in the Huron Tract, the family was in comparatively good circumstances. His education was somewhat limited. The means for obtaining an education in Ireland at that time, and indeed up to recent date, were not of a high order. The teacher was usually some old man whom the course of nature had rendered unfit for physical labor. In his youth he had been taught to read and write a little, and when strength had failed he earned a little money by teaching, to keep starvation from the door. His pupils were supposed to pay sixpence or a shilling a month for his services. This sum had to be supplemented still further by every scholar bringing with him so much turf every morning to keep the cabin where school was kept warm during the day. During a visit to Ireland a few years ago, the writer visited one of these seats of learning in the County of Tyrone. It was a small, low building, used for a dwelling-house and a school. On entering the little cabin you stepped down nearly a foot to the clay floor, which, from the tramping of little feet, was worn into holes. Here and there we could see patches that had recently been renewed by fresh clay. At one end a great turf fire was blazing, not in a chimney, for the school contained no such convenience, having simply a hole in the roof

that served the two-fold purpose of letting down the rain and letting out the smoke. A few benches placed around the walls composed the whole outfit for teaching the young idea how to shoot. An old lady was sitting by the fire smoking a very short black pipe. After a few minutes conversation we left. As we departed we left the old lady a souvenir of our visit, when she curtsied very low, saying at the same time, "God bless your honor ; may you have many happy days,"—the first and the last blessing we ever received.

#### COMING TO BLANSHARD.

At a similar seminary to the one described, Mr. Radcliff received his education. From the time he left school until he was twenty-two he worked with his father on the farm. Indeed he might have remained there, as the holding was a large one, but the life of an Irish farmer did not very well suit the ideas of a person of his energy and determination. The Huron Tract was being opened up at this time by the Canada Company, and it was more in accord with his adventurous spirit to come to Canada and make a home for himself, than to remain at his ease in his native land. At the age of twenty-two he decided to make the venture, and sailed from Belfast on April the 16th, 1842. His voyage to Quebec was, upon the whole, uneventful, but they experienced such stormy weather that on more than one occasion they thought they would have been lost. At the end of eight weeks of buffeting on the stormy Atlantic they arrived in safety. On his arrival he at once sought and obtained work, at which he stayed for one year. But the eastern part of the province was not to his taste. He

heard of the more favored country in the west, around what was then known as New London, and determined to push his fortune in that locality. Accordingly, early in 1844, he came west and reached London. He obtained employment here, at which he remained four years. During the few years he labored in the township of London, he gained experience which he found of great advantage in after life when he had a farm of his own. The duties in connection with the clearing of a new farm are so entirely unlike the methods in the old settlements, that a year or two contiguous to a new country is of great advantage to a new settler. This Mr. Radcliff soon found. He had learned to use the axe effectively, the most important tool on a new farm. He had also served his apprenticeship at driving oxen, in which duty he was considered the most proficient in the section of the country where he lived. It may seem strange to those not acquainted with the clearing of land, that any one man could excel another in the simple duty of driving a pair of oxen; but the old pioneers knew well that a good or bad ox teamster in a logging field meant success or defeat to the men who were rolling. Mr. Radcliff soon found that the greatest power with oxen, as with men, lay in kindness. A teamster who continually abused his cattle was considered very stupid, and always succeeded in making his team as stupid as himself. Mr. Radcliff's qualities as a teamster were soon found out, and he experienced at loggings no difficulty in always having the most expert gang to follow him. During the years he had been in the country he had steady employment, and being of a thrifty and saving disposition, had saved a large portion of his

wages. The township of Blanshard, as it has been stated elsewhere, had been surveyed and thrown open for settlement in 1841, and was being rapidly taken up. With his little savings he decided at once to become a pioneer of the township and make for himself a home in the new country. In February, 1848, or 51 years ago, he selected lot 25, in the 10th concession, which from that day until the present has been his home. Not a tree had been cut on the farm ; the roads had not been cut out except in small patches, and there they were blocked with the refuse of fallen timber that rendered them impassable. There were neither schools nor churches, and the whole section around him may almost literally be said to have been unbroken forest. The Hays family had preceded him, and made little openings here and there, in the midst of which, little shanties seemed to have dropped down amongst stumps, logs, and brush. Having thus located a farm, his next duty was to select a suitable place for his house and proceed to its erection. As there were no pumps or wells in those days, a site for a shanty was, wherever possible, chosen near where water could be obtained. The erection of the building itself, although a matter of considerable labor, was not attended with much difficulty to those early settlers, who could do almost anything with the axe. The style of the building was simplicity itself, and the architect who first formulated the plans for a backwoods shanty must have had an extraordinary foresight into the adaptability of his plans to the circumstances. Out of the many structures erected in Blanshard and surrounding townships fifty or sixty years ago, we never knew one to deviate in the slight-



est degree from the original. Buildings of this kind were constructed throughout without a single nail or piece of iron in any form whatever. When a new settler wanted to raise a house, he asked a few of the nearest neighbors for assistance, and the structure was completed, as far as the walls were concerned, in one day. This consisted of the four sides of great logs laid at right angles to each other at the corners. If the roof was to be one of troughs, then the front part was made one log higher than the rear, thus giving a slight angle to the roof towards the rear of the building. A hole was cut out in front for a door and window, the window rarely containing more than four lights. The door and the hinges, and the floor, were all made with the axe by the settler, and were taken from white basswood, split and made into thin plank. The roof was also made from basswood trees split in the centre and scooped out with the axe. These were laid across the walls, the lower ones with the hollow part upwards and the upper ones with the hollow part downwards. The seams of the walls were then filled with chinking, over which was laid a good covering of clay, both inside the building and on the outside, when, with the exception of the chimney, the castle of the Canadian lord of the soil was complete. In those days the modern stove had not been invented, and the chimney was a part of the building of great importance. It was constructed of stone at the base, and up as far as the great beam, which served as the mantel, where, from its front to the rear, was placed the lug-pole. From the lug-pole to the top of the roof and a little beyond was built with clay and wood split into narrow pieces and laid at right angles to

form a vent. The fireplace was of wide dimensions, and in the winter was kept constantly piled with great logs, which lighted up the whole inside of the house. From the lug-pole dangled a chain and hooks, where the pots were hung on the blazing fire. The bread was baked in the bake-kettle on the hearth. A portion of the hot coals were raked out on the hearth, on which the bake-kettle was placed containing the bread, the lid put on and a further portion of hot coals placed on that, with a still further supply of hot coals gathered around the side ; and there the patient and hard-working wife of the settler made the bread for her husband and family.

#### THE PIONEER HOME.

In those log houses and similar dwellings have been born, and there played in youthful innocence, many of Canada's greatest and most gifted men. Rude though they were, and humble, the associations of the old log house are still dear to many, although removed far from them.

If happiness consists in a consciousness of duty faithfully done in the years that are past, in thankfulness and contentment with the present, and a holy and abiding hope of the future, the subject of this sketch is triply blessed from having a high appreciation of all the three. We deem it one of the grandest dispensations of heaven that true happiness is not peculiar to any age, position, or place in society. How often it eludes the grasp of the rich and the great, and flying away finds a resting place in homes of the poor and in the humble dwelling of the backwoods settler. The remembrances that still cling to the old log house,

the long, weary struggle with the world, and the final triumph over their difficulties, still fill the hearts of the few old pioneers that remain. Time, that has made a desolation of all their aspirations for the future, still has left them happy memories of the scenes that can return no more. If these old decayed and rotting walls have been the shelter of sorrowing ones, they have also been the home of exceeding great joy. In the long winter nights, when the storm was raging without, the snow driving across the dreary waste and piling up great drifts around the doors, the old pioneer with the "big Bible," once his father's pride, laid on his knee, would raise his heart in thankfulness to heaven in the voice of Psalms, and simple songs of praise, till the old log house seemed like a paradise in the forest.

From this time forward Mr. Radcliff assumed the responsibilities and had to face the difficulties and trials of a new settler. On the 9th day of December, 1847, he married Elizabeth Hedley, a sister of Roger Hedley, of the town of St. Marys, and in the month of February following he brought his young wife into the log dwelling he had recently completed. This lady was born in London Township, her parents being from Northumberland in England. From her parents she learned and always spoke with a strong Northumberland accent. She was a kind and motherly woman, and entirely devoted to her husband and family. For over fifty years they fought the battle of life together, and saw their children grow up around them as respectable and good citizens of their native country. There were born to them ten of a family, all of whom are alive except one,—Helen, who died at the age of 13 years.

Those remaining are Robert, on the old homestead; David, a merchant in Toronto; James, C. P. R. ticket agent, Toronto; Samuel, practising medicine in the North-west; Allan, in the North-west; John, in the West; Mary Ann, in Chicago; Elizabeth, in Chicago; and Jane, with her father in Blanshard. Mr. Radcliff is a man of strong Presbyterian proclivities—in fact a better specimen of the old Presbyterian would be difficult to find. Firm and determined in his religious principles, bordering even on dogmatism, he never gives much attention or takes much concern in the affairs of other denominations. His early training at the fire-side of his father had left a lasting impression on his mind. His manner of thought on all matters pertaining to theology was based and formed intensely on the rules and injunctions laid down in the Confession of Faith and the Shorter Catechism. On these lines he trained his family. He was strict in the government of his household, and his children knew well that any duties he imposed upon them had better be attended to, otherwise it might be unpleasant for themselves. It is gratifying to him, however, now to know that his efforts for their good have been amply rewarded, as all of them are doing well and are a credit to him as well as to themselves.

#### EARLY REMINISCENCES.

As he was now settled in life, he at once set to work to improve his farm by cutting down the timber and preparing a fallow for next summer. In the spring he succeeded in clearing a couple of acres which he sowed with wheat so that he might have bread for the next year. Sugar and molasses were plentiful; so were

potatoes, but bread was quite another thing. In a new country the obtaining of bread was one of the greatest difficulties the new settler had to contend with. When he was able to raise a little wheat he had to carry it frequently many miles to get it ground. Potatoes were plentiful, and with beech nuts lying everywhere his pigs soon got so fat they were hardly able to move, although beech-nut pork was not the kind that would tempt the palate of an epicure. Still it was pork, and backwoodsmen did not draw very nice distinctions as to the quality of the fare set before them. When a man has no choice of food it is wonderful how his taste becomes relaxed. In the harvest he reaped from his little plot of wheat sufficient to supply the family till next year's crop would be ready. To supply his immediate wants he had to thresh with a flail a couple of bags, the little stock of flour in the settlement being exhausted. It was the custom among the old settlers to give a share of everything to their neighbors as long as it lasted. If any one of them had a bag of flour the settlement would not be in want. In getting the two bags of wheat ground a supply would be obtained and the wolf kept from the door. But how was he to get it to the mill?—and thereby hangs a tale indicative of the terrible inconvenience attending the life of a poor settler in the backwoods. He had nothing but a sled, and the mill was sixteen miles away, at Carlyle, in the township of Williams. A neighbor living three-and-a-half miles farther up the concession had an ox-cart which he determined to hire and take his wheat to the mill. He accordingly walked up and succeeded in effecting an arrangement for the ox-cart. In making the journey there and

back he travelled seven miles. He took oxen and got the cart, travelling seven miles more. His trip to the mill took two days and was sixteen miles each way, or thirty-two miles in all. He returned the cart to the owner, adding another seven miles. In going to do one day's work with his oxen, as the payment for the hire of the cart, he travelled another seven miles; so that in getting his two bags of wheat to the mill he travelled sixty miles and spent three days' labor with himself and oxen. On another occasion he started with the oxen and sled to St. Marys with a small grist, when, after a long pull through the mud, he reached the river where a bridge of timber had been erected, only to find it gone, the whole structure except one stringer having been carried away the night previous by a freshet. The water was still very high, but necessity has no law, and flour he had to have. He took his oxen from the sled and chained them to a stump, and getting a bag on his back, started to walk across the stringer over the river. This he accomplished in safety, backwards and forwards, till the whole was across. After it was ground the whole was again carried on his back to the sled on the other side of the river, when he again turned for home, which he reached after having been nearly twenty-four hours in making a trip of less than six miles each way. On another occasion the neighbors had borrowed flour from each other until all the stocks in sight were completely exhausted. One of them, however, had a bag of wheat, but had neither oxen nor cart to get to the mill. A settler on the eighth concession had been able to get a wagon, which was accordingly rented for the trip, and another journey of fifty miles made with a

single bag of wheat. But this state of things did not last long with Mr. Radcliff. He had saved up his ashes, and, boiling it into potash, started for London with his oxen and sled, where he got as much for his potash as bought a new ox-cart, the first vehicle he ever owned, and came back to Blanshard feeling that he was a rather prosperous man.

#### BURIAL IN THE EARLY DAYS.

"She was a lonely woman and left none to mourn."

We must now relate a mournful event which exemplifies in another direction the hardships of the pioneer. As life necessarily implies death, so, wherever we have life, death is always hovering near to claim its dole from mortality. In this case the work of the destroyer was not glossed over with those attentions and decorations which the bereaved love to place around the mortal remains of the departed. There were no tinsel or bright ceremonies, no flowers heaped on the corpse, which in their lovely beauty appear to destroy to some extent the awful aspect of death. Around the body there were no aching hearts, no sighs, no tears, no minister to point out to the few that came to the burial that mortality would put on immortality, and that the life here was simply probationary to the life beyond the grave. But the body had to be laid in its last resting place, and it was horrifying to think that it should be consigned to its kindred dust without a coffin. Mr. Radcliff, whose mind revolted at such a condition of things, wrenched off a few boards from the inside of the house, and out of this material, with the aid of another neighbor, constructed a rude receptacle in



which to place the body. It appears somewhat ludicrous, however, when we consider his anxiety that this rude coffin should be constructed in proper form. Not having any tools better than the axe, he found it almost impossible to give the proper shape at the point where the shoulders would rest. To overcome this difficulty, a quantity of water was heated to the boiling point, in which he placed the ends of the boards for the sides, when, after they had become softened, he placed the ends between two logs and bent them to the desired shape. The bottom being ready, he nailed them on and kept them in position. Into this rough box the body was laid, with a pillow of straw under its head. When the time for interment had come, he presented himself with the oxen and sled, and having placed the coffin in the sled, fastened it with a chain so that it could not shake off in the journey. So the little cortege moved on and wended its way through the woods to the burial plot where McIntyre's church now stands. The scene was most impressive in its simplicity. There was no service at the home they left; there was no service at the grave. When the chain that held the coffin to the sled was unbound, a few of the strong men lifted it in silence, lowered it to its last resting-place, and filling in the earth left to its quiet sleep all that was mortal of what was once a human being. When we contrast the present state of things with those of fifty years ago, which we have described, the change appears great indeed. All that human ingenuity can accomplish, all that wealth can buy, are brought into service now to disguise as much as possible the ghastly aspect of death. The flowers, the subdued light of



the apartment, the solemn look and the soft motions of the watchers around the beautiful casket, are all evidences of the love and tenderness of those who are still on this side of eternity. When we contrast the splendor of the hearse and the sombre drapings of the horses with the oxen and sled, and the long line of carriages that follow the departed one, to show their last respects, with the few hard-handed men that accompanied the sled through the woods, we can scarcely realize that only a half century has passed.

#### KILLED AT A BARN-RAISING.

Another event of a melancholy kind that occurred shortly after Mr. Radcliff came to the township, and in which he was closely concerned, ought to be noticed. In the early settlement the buildings on the farms were wholly built of logs. The erection of the log buildings, especially barns, which were raised to a great height, was a dangerous operation. When we consider that some of these barns had from sixteen to eighteen rounds of great logs piled one on top of another, it will be seen that those placed at the highest elevation must have required great skill and care to put them there without accident. The skids were always placed near the corners, and the men on the ground who manipulated the "muleys" kept them as near the outside of the skid as possible. If one end of the log was pushed up a little beyond the other it would be sure to slip from the skid and come to the ground, endangering the lives of many men. That more accidents did not occur certainly arose from chance rather than from the care of the hands. The grog boss at raisings was always on hand with a supply

of the "elevater," and at the end of the day, when the building was high and required steadiness, quite a number of the men had become reckless from the frequency and depth of their potations. On one of these occasions, at a raising on the next farm to Mr. Radcliff's, a log slipped from the skid and, falling to the ground, killed the proprietor of the building. The feelings of the poor wife may be imagined when the dead husband was carried into the shanty. As she could be of no service around the dead body, Mr. Radcliff asked her to his home for the evening, which invitation she accepted. During the night he was awakened by the moaning and shouts of the poor woman, who appeared to be walking backwards and forwards in the darkness. When he made a light he saw at once the heart-broken creature had become mad. One of her little boys coming into the room, she flew at him with the fury of a lion and would have torn him in pieces. For the remainder of the night he had to watch and hold her from doing the family injury. When the morning came, which was Sunday, and the settlers not moving out early, he dared not leave to get assistance. As a last resource he pushed the demented woman outside and held her in his arms, shouting at the top of his voice. The late Robert Somerville, who lived on the next farm, heard his cries and at once went to help him. Other neighbors came in and relieved him from his trying position. He kept her in his house for several days until means were found to place her in an asylum. It is pleasing to know that she afterwards recovered, but still retained the memory of all she had done during the period of her frenzy. Two other settlers were killed soon after at barn-raisings,

which had such effect on him that forever after he allowed no liquor on the farm, and he has the honor of being the first settler in this section to have raised his building without whiskey.

#### WOLVES AND BEARS.

The roads in the township in the early days were simply horrible, and it was almost as much as a man's life was worth to make a trip over them for a few miles. At that time potash was the only product of the farm for which money could be obtained, and as a consequence nearly all the settlers made more or less of that commodity. On one occasion he went to St. Marys with a barrel in the ox-sled for Mr. Edward Long, the present respected treasurer of St. Marys, who shipped nearly all of that class of goods brought into town. He pulled along fairly well until he reached Silver Creek, when he found the mud so deep that he nearly lost himself, oxen, sled, and the potash. But if the mud was bad, the corduroy was, if possible, worse. The inventor of corduroy must certainly have been in league with the evil one, as such a road could only have been introduced by the great enemy of mankind. We believe we are safe in saying that a ride of half a mile over a piece of new made corduroy would be punishment sufficient for any offence that a man might commit against society.

Wild animals, too, if not numerous, were still represented, particularly wolves and bears, and at night could be heard howling around the little dwellings in the woods. On a pleasant evening in the summer, at dusk, Mr. Radcliff, having occasion to go to the door, heard a poor porker set up a most unearthly

squealing in the woods near Fish Creek. A bear whose larder had been somewhat depleted had formed the plan of replenishing it with a piece of beech-nut pork, and carried off the poor animal bodily. A trio of Nimrods composed of the late John Slack, William Slack, and Mr. Hunt, determined to secure bruin the next evening if he came back to increase his supply. But to enable them to secure the bear, they very discreetly made arrangements to secure themselves. Accordingly they erected a scaffold, on which all three of the hunters mounted, with guns charged to the muzzle, and kept watch during the night. Whether his bearship was not in love with beech-nut pork, or whether he considered the supply ample for his immediate wants, history sayeth not. At all events he did not make his appearance, and the hunters, after long watching, returned to their homes with their game-bags empty.

Blanshard at this time had no churches and few schools. A log school-house had been built at the corner on the tenth concession, where worship was held on Sabbath days by the different denominations. The Rev. Mr. Skinner made occasional visits to the Presbyterian families located near by, and preached in the old log school, administering the rites of baptism to the children, and in which place several of Mr. Radcliff's children were baptized. He was always in favor of free schools, and during his residence in the township has contributed to the erection of five. At this corner was opened the first post office in the township, outside of St. Marys, which was kept by the late Mr. Bell as post master. The village of Prospect Hill was not then in existence, and the first hotel was opened in that village by Robert Shaw.

## SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES.

During his long career he never neglected his duties to the church to which he belonged, and supported her schemes as far as it lay in his power. Some forty years ago he, with Mr. Forsyth, Mr. Hamilton, the late T. D. Hamilton, and others, erected a Presbyterian church near the lower end of the tenth concession. In this congregation he was chosen as elder, and continued to hold that honored position until the church was removed. In 1866 the Rev. Robert Hall, who was pastor, resigned the charges of Granton and Fish Creek, as the church at the tenth was called, and devoted his whole attention to the churches in Nissouri. A call was then extended to the Rev. Allan Finlay, who ministered to both churches, Granton and Fish Creek, when, after a few years, the Fish Creek congregation was broken up, a portion going to Granton and a portion to Nissouri. Mr. Radcliff then joined the Granton Church, where, during the pastorate of the Rev. David Mann, he was again chosen elder. Previous to the organization of the church named, he sought church privileges in the town of St. Marys, to which place he walked for several years, the greater part of the way through the woods.

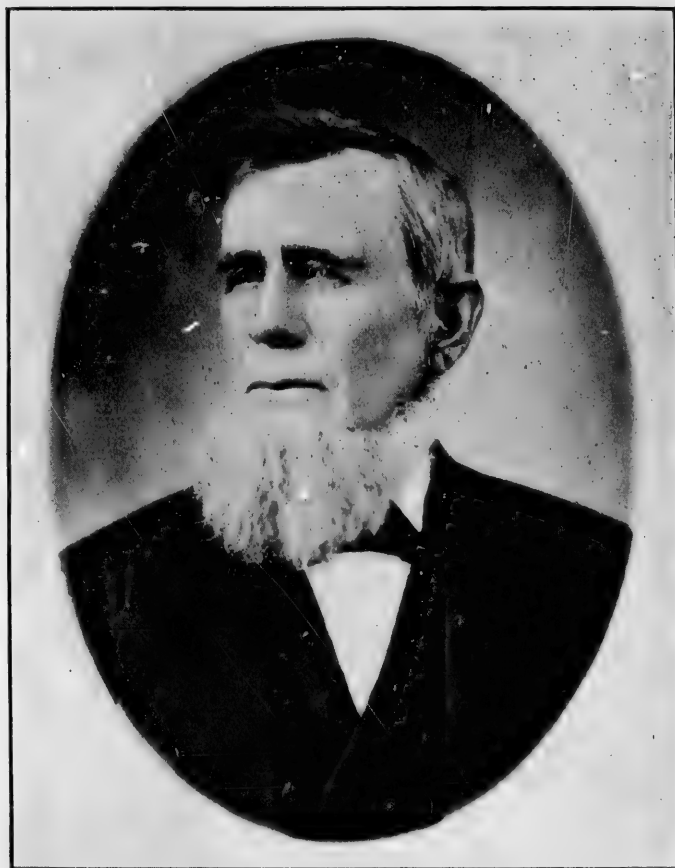
Mr. Radcliff's instincts were of a purely domestic character, and he never sought public place or position. With the exception of four years that he sat on the board of directors of the B. M. F. I. Co., he never held public office. His care and attention were devoted to the management of his farm and the furtherance of the interests of his family. He took an active part in the promotion of the scheme for building the Proof Line gravel road, and always gave a helping

hand to any plan for the furtherance of improvements which were for the good of the people. In politics he was a Reformer, and was not at all shy in the advocacy of the principles of that party. In his dealings with men he was strictly honorable, and was liberal enough to concede a point where positive evidence could not be obtained to the contrary. Although not a teetotaler, he has been temperate through his whole life. He was always industrious and paid close attention to his own business, in which course of conduct he has been amply rewarded with a competence for his old age. He was not at all excitable, but firm and decided in his character, not particularly fond of show, and moderate in his tastes and desires. In business he was cautious and shrewd, and could not be easily swayed either to one side or the other. He was never what might be called a strong, robust man, though he has always been in the enjoyment of good health. The snows of nearly eighty winters, however, have not passed over him without leaving some trace, and the loss of his partner, who had stood by him for over fifty years, leaves him alone, so to speak, in the world. He is still hale and hearty, and it seems that many years may yet pass away ere he will be called on to pass the bourne from which no traveller ever returns.

## CHAPTER IX.

## JAMES DINSMORE.

THERE are perhaps few of Blanshard's old settlers who at the outset of their career had a more chequered life than Mr. James Dinsmore, the subject of the following sketch. He was of sanguine temperament, restless and energetic in his disposition. He had great independence of character, and considered himself equal to any man, no matter what his social position may have been. He was untiring in industry, and zealous in the prosecution of any scheme, either for his own or the public good. He was a confiding and open-hearted friend, but persevering and implacable in the denunciation of his opponents. He was somewhat deficient in tact, and his political efforts were carried to success, not by an adroit exercise of those qualities that raise politicians to power, but by the strength of his representations and an honest, manly advocacy of those principles which he conceived to be just and right. Such are a few of the most prominent points in the character of this man who for many years wielded great influence in Blanshard, and to some extent divided the representative honors with Mr. Cathcart, his great opponent.



JAMES DINSMORE.





James Dinsmore was born in the parish of Drumholm, County of Donegal, Ireland, on the 21st day of March, 1821—over 78 years ago. Like almost all the old settlers of Blanshard, he was the son of a farmer, and on the farm he spent his boyhood, attending school in the town of Donegal until he was able by his labor to contribute to his own support. His father had been actively engaged during the troubles in Ireland at the latter part of the eighteenth century on the side of the Government. The tales of that momentous period in the history of his native country, and of the terrible trials and dangers to those who espoused the cause of the ruling power, had often been told by his parents as they sat around the turf fire in the long winter nights. These old stories made a great impression on his young mind, so much so that they to some extent influenced his manner of thought during his life. Although his politics were practically democratic, he was most loyal to the flag of old Britain. He felt a pride in the fact that he was born a subject of a great and most glorious throne that is yet destined to sway the destinies of the world.

His father's circumstances were not such as would enable him to give his sons much assistance at their outset in life. Five young, energetic lads were growing up around him, and he saw that a change in his condition would have to be made soon. The agents of the Canada Company had at this period permeated the northern part of the Emerald Isle, inducing the struggling population of that over-populated country to leave old Ireland and go to the new fertile land of the West. Whatever may be said regarding the methods of the Company in the sale and manipulation

of their great estate, there can be but one opinion as to the class of settlers that took up their lands. A more hardy, energetic, honest, persevering body of men never made homes for themselves anywhere on the American continent. Of this contingent Blanshard fortunately got her full share. The Dinsmores of the tenth concession, the Cathcarts and Creightons on the Base Line, the Switzers on the north side of the township, the Armstrongs and McCulloughs on the Mitchell Road, have made a record most honorable for themselves and which should have a marked influence on the rising generation. These, with many other good and noble men that have long since passed away, laid deep the foundations of the prosperity of what is considered one of the most progressive townships in the west.

It was therefore decided that the little holding in Donegal should be disposed of, and new homes sought in the great country on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Accordingly, in the spring of 1835, the family bade adieu to old Ireland and all her associations, and which no one of them ever saw more. To the younger members of a household it is always an easy matter to remove and change their locality; in fact the very essence of young life consists in change and variety. But with the old or middle aged it is very different. Ties spring up around them as years pass by, light as air seemingly in themselves, yet stronger than bands of steel.

"The dear affections of the heart  
Outlive the forms that give them birth."

After ten weeks of a dreary, stormy voyage they arrived at Quebec, and coming on west reached the

city of Kingston, where they remained one year. The family then left Kingston and came to Toronto. After staying in Toronto for about a year, Mr. Dinsmore, the elder, removed to a farm in Toronto Township. During all these years the family had all remained together; but the time had now come when some of the young men should branch out for themselves. The subject of our sketch therefore determined, young as he was, to face the stern realities of life. He was then sixteen years of age, at which period not many young men think of putting on the harness for themselves. But he was not afraid that any circumstance or condition of things would arise with which he would not be able to cope successfully. His independence of thought and feeling, coupled with his natural impetuosity of character, urged him on into the stream, sink or swim. He made up his mind to embrace the first opportunity whereby he could make an honest living. His initiatory step, as one of the toilers of the great world, was in the capacity of bartender in a hotel. The hostlery known as the Edinburgh Castle, in Toronto, was kept by an old Scotchman who had fought through the Peninsular War with Wellington, and was on the celebrated field of Waterloo, where he contributed by his valor to the defeat of that great scourge of the world, Napoleon Bonaparte. He did not remain long behind the bar, although he had given satisfaction to his employer.

Events were then transpiring in Upper Canada (as it was then called) which shook society to its very centre and threatened for a time to overturn the Government. A little clique of politicians, known as the Family Compact, had grasped the whole power and

patronage of this province in their own hands. Some of these were most unprincipled men, and had established an oligarchy that would undoubtedly have destroyed the liberties of the people and sapped the prosperity of the young and growing province. But happily for the people of this country, a young and irrepressible Scotchman had espoused the cause of the settlers. For years he fought out his self-imposed task and stood as the first champion for free representation and responsible Government. Though we deplore the terrible extreme to which he ultimately led a large section of the Canadians, few men will deny that the political results since the struggle of 1837 are, to a large extent, owing to his fearless conduct in defending the rights of the poor settlers who were seeking a home in this country. Time is dealing kindly with the memory of this great man, and the day will come when he will be looked on as one of those unselfish spirits who lay upon the altar of their country all they have in the world, as an offering for the liberties of their fellowmen. From the early training Mr. Dinsmore had received, and from his intense loyalty to the old land, we can experience no difficulty in finding what his sentiments were on this occasion. Young as he was, he at once enlisted under Captain Price, and shouldering his gun, joined the ranks as a volunteer in Captain Price's corps. He served for about six months, when, considering his youth and a not very robust constitution, he was amongst the first to be discharged when the rising had collapsed. The next time we hear of Mr. Dinsmore is in the capacity of a deck-hand on board the steamer *William IV*. The life of a sailor apparently was not to his taste, as he only stayed at

this business for one season. After associating for some time with a gang of framers, he entered into the employ of a bankrupt stock dealer, in Brampton. Here he first essayed the business of auctioneer at the age of twenty years, and continued to swing the hammer almost continuously till he had reached the age of sixty-nine. The business of an auctioneer was exactly suited to his nature, and, as might be expected, he excelled in it. His services were in request all over a large section of the country. He knew men well, and being naturally full of Irish wit, had the happy faculty of keeping the bidders in the best of humor.

Thus far he had led a rather roving and unsettled life. We next find him in the lumber woods on the Grand River, at which occupation he remained for three or four years. The time had now arrived when it was necessary to adopt some plan for his future career. The new township of Blanshard had been thrown open for settlement in 1840. His father, with his other brothers, had still remained on the rented farm in Toronto township. But the life of a tenant on a rented farm did not offer much inducement for a man with a growing family around him. By going into a new country they might have to undergo hardship and inconvenience for a few years. With industry and economy all this would undoubtedly be overcome. The labor they had to spend in the rented place to pay the rent might be better expended in making a farm for themselves. So it was decided to try their fortune in the new township. In the fall of 1842 the elder Mr. Dinsmore came west, and located a place for himself and one for each of his sons, and formed what is known as the Dinsmore settlement.

John, the eldest, took lot 14, James lot 16, Thomas lot 20, in the tenth concession, Samuel and David lots 16, 17, and 18, in the eleventh concession. This part of the township at that time was a complete wilderness. Only one or two settlers had preceded them. There were no roads, no marks to show anywhere that the foot of the white man ever trod those wilds, except the survey post, and an occasional blaze on the trees. But they had confidence in themselves and in the future of the country. The Dinsmore settlement was soon known as one of the most progressive sections in Blanshard. The whole of the brothers were much alike in their nature, steady and industrious, and of unimpeachable integrity. It is pleasing to note that this family were, in the course of time, amply rewarded for their perseverance by attaining comfort and a competence for old age. The greatest difficulty that most of the old settlers had to encounter in their new homes was the want of money to obtain the commonest necessities of life. To overcome this circumstance James Dinsmore, with his father and brothers, had for two or three seasons to go back to Toronto township in the summer for the purpose of earning a few dollars to enable them to purchase food for the winter. Returning to the woods in the fall of the year, they chopped down the forest till spring, and thus, although very slow progress was made, something was being done. They built shanties and cleared small patches for potatoes and wheat, and so came on by degrees, still hoping and still doing. The journey back and forth between Blanshard and Toronto was made on foot. It was a great undertaking to trudge away for one hundred miles, much of it over bad roads and

through a wild country, but it is said "the back is aye made for the burden;" and these old pioneers surely "run the race set before them" nobly and well.

He had now reached the period when most men experience a desire to become settled in life. It was therefore necessary that he should take to himself a partner to share his joys and his sorrows, for joy and sorrow seem to be the lot of all. He had been fairly prosperous in his farming operations. He could boast of a good farm, a shanty, a pig in the pen, cows in the yard, and a yoke of oxen. All this now-a-days would not be considered a great fortune to offer to a young lady in return for her affections; but it was all he had to offer. No doubt in thinking the matter over in his mind, he could not very well understand how with all these, his whole worldly goods, placed in the balance on one side, and himself thrown in, the scale on the other side, with the affections of a sensible young lady, would not touch the beam. Young marriageable women in the township of Blanshard at that time were rather a scarce article. Like most young men, while he had been preparing the cage he had been watching for some fair one to place in it. Summoning up his whole store of fortitude, he went to the township of London, and on the 4th of February, 1847, was able to call Miss Rebecca Freeborne his wife. This was the greatest piece of good fortune of his life. For over fifty years they have lived along together, Mrs. Dinsmore being in every way a most estimable person, a dutiful and affectionate wife. She was always light-hearted and gay, until the hand of affliction, a few years ago, fell heavily upon her in the loss of her daughter. Still even now, at her advanced age, her



eyes, which were black and piercing, sparkle with jollity and good nature. She was always ready to second his efforts in everything that tended to his good or that of his family; and like many men in the world, he owes much of his success to the good counsel of his wife. His family consisted of nine children, two of whom are dead, John and Margaret. Those living are, Andrew, in Imlay City, Mich.; Mrs. T. Robinson (Jane), London township; Mrs. Robinson, (Mary Ann), also of London township; Samuel, at home; Nelson, in Manitoba; Wellington, on the old homestead; and Newman, in California. But time and tide wait for no man; and as years passed away he was, at the end of the fifties, one of the wealthiest farmers in the township. He had, shortly after coming to Blanshard, taken up the business of auctioneering, a manner of life, as we have said elsewhere, entirely in accordance with his taste. In this business his reputation extended over a wide circle. The townships of London, Biddulph, Blanshard, Usborne, Downie, Fullarton, and the Nissouris, all required his services. There is scarcely a road in any of these municipalities that he has not traversed at all hours of the night. No matter how far away he had been, he never, without a single exception, failed to get to his own home. Although not robust looking, he had a constitution of iron; otherwise he must long ere now have succumbed to such repeated exposure. Away back in those early days he had many strange experiences. The "grog boss" at sales, as at loggings, was, next to the auctioneer, the most important functionary. His duties were considered very important, and were sometimes far reaching in their effects. Not a few of the old settlers who have had to leave the township attribute

the first cause of their trouble to too close an acquaintance with the "grog boss." Sometimes the result of this officer's operations took a ludicrous turn. On one occasion, when selling in the township of Blanshard, a certain agriculturist of the municipality had renewed his acquaintance with a dispenser of the "two forty" so frequently that he found it necessary for his comfort to take a horizontal position beside a straw stack for a short period of quietness and repose. From the result of an accident this tiller of the soil had lost one of his legs; but some local artist had supplied him with another made of good sound timber, the growth of Canadian soil. A dispute between some of the bidders culminated, as they often did in those early days, in a free fight. The tussle continued for a minute or two with varying success among the combatants. One of the belligerents, who was a strong believer in potentialities, seeing what he thought was a stout cudgel lying among the straw, grasped the wooden leg of the sleeping farmer and tore it from its moorings. With this weapon he entered the fray and dispensed his favors with a fearless impartiality which indicated that he was no respecter of persons. The sleeping farmer at last, from the noise of the affair, awoke, and trying to regain the perpendicular, found that one of his legs was doing duty in some other sphere of usefulness than the one designed by the maker. A volley of unearthly yells, coupled with a broadside of language considered not gentlemanly, excited the risibility of the crowd to such an extent that order and the leg were both restored, and the sale proceeded.

At the separation of the township of Blanshard from the township of Downie and the introduction of the

new Municipal Act, Mr. Dinsmore was soon called to take an active part in political affairs. In the year 1855 he accordingly became a candidate for municipal honors, and was elected as councillor for the division in which he resided. This was his first attempt at public business as a representative of the people. He held his seat at the Board as councillor uninterruptedly for several years, being elected deputy reeve, and finally was honored with the chair of the first officer of the township. Like all public men, his success did not run in one straight and unobstructed stream. He had many difficulties to face and overcome. Misrepresentation, the jealousy of his rivals, and those who had once been his equals but were now falling far in the rear, were sometimes more than a match for his energy and shrewdness. He suffered defeat more than once, but defeat to him meant an expansion of his energies. He was irrepressible. All the calumnies circulated against him by his political enemies had no effect on his conduct. Like a trained fighter, no matter how hard he was struck, when time was called he was up in his corner and ready to give or take a knock down in the next round. During all these years his financial condition was still improving. He had erected a brick building that was then and for many years after, the only brick building in that part of the country. He had attained to a comfortable position in a very short time. The forest had been cleared away, roads had been made, schools had been built, and the settlement on the tenth concession of Blanshard was fast taking on the appearance of comfort and affluence which characterizes it at the present time. At the election of 1869, Mr. Dinsmore and Mr. Cathart took

the field against each other for the reeve's chair. They were by far the most prominent as well as the most popular men in the municipality, and as might be expected, the contest was a keen one. The question at issue was not one of personal fitness for the honor, but a great principle was at stake between the candidates, and which the electors were called upon to decide. Meetings were held in various parts of the township, where the several questions at issue were discussed among the people. The great principle the ratepayers were asked to pronounce upon by their votes was whether the toll gates should be removed and the roads made free, or whether the old system of gates should be retained. Mr. Dinsmore advocated the old system ; Mr. Cathcart supported and led the abolition party. The causes which led up to this contest I need not enter upon here. They will be found fully explained in the sketch of Mr. Cathcart already before the public. Mr. Dinsmore and his friends on this occasion were routed, horse, foot, and artillery, and Mr. Cathcart gained the greatest victory of his whole career as a public man. But this victory of Mr. Cathcart led to another a few years later for Mr. Dinsmore and his friends, of which no one on either side at that time could ever have had the remotest idea. After being defeated he remained in private life till 1874, when he was again elected to the reeve's chair. During this year a rather ludicrous incident occurred at the Board, which will bear repeating as an indication of the qualification of some of our leading men of that day. The Ontario Government had passed an Act in the previous session to enable rural municipalities to place a tax on dogs, for the purpose of creating a fund which

was to be applied for the payment of sheep killed by predatory canines. This law in itself was excellent, but like a great deal of such legislature, though good in theory, it did not work well in practice. Designing men that had an old croak sheep on the farm were always unfortunate (or fortunate) in having their flock decimated by fierce canines, but by some strange coincidence or other it was always the most ancient ones of the flock that were destroyed. Thus the real result of the Act was to create a market for much of the venerable stock of this class in the township. Another law was finally passed compelling all applicants under the Act to make affidavit before a magistrate that the claim was just and true in every particular. At one of the meetings of the Board an applicant under the Act presented a claim, but as no affidavit was attached, Mr. Dinsmore instructed the claimant to see a worthy dispenser of justice who lived close to the council room, and comply with the requirements of the law before his claim could be paid. The claimant, having gone to the magistrate, soon returned and presented the reeve with a piece of paper, which he examined carefully and handed it without remark to the next legislator on his left; and so it passed around the table amongst the members of the Board till it reached the clerk. This officer was supposed to be able to decipher the caligraphy of all correspondents, and his achievements in this line had often been considered by the township fathers as partaking of the marvellous. He examined the document closely, and being somewhat of a literary turn of mind, gave vent to his feelings in a quotation from Tony Foster, "It's a d—— cramp piece of penmanship." This was the signal for a burst

of laughter from the whole Board. None of them had been able to read the precious affidavit. One of the members affirmed that ink must have been spilled on the paper. The reeve declared it was a map of the Sandwich Islands. Another said it was like the tactics of his opponent at the last contest, fearfully dark, and past finding out. At last a Daniel came to judgment in the person of the worthy magistrate himself, who informed the assembled wisdom at the table that his pen was bad, and he sadly out of practice, and for fear that they might not exactly understand it, "he had come himself to tell by word of mouth what the paper contained."

#### ST. MARYS MARKET FEES.

We must now give the history of a transaction successfully carried out by Mr. Dinsmore, which was the most important and far-reaching in its effects of any piece of legislation ever transacted in the township of Blanshard. It has been stated elsewhere that the toll-gates had been abolished in the township, at great cost to the municipality, and the splendid roads leading everywhere made free to all. From the period that a market building was erected in St. Marys, the Town Council had from time to time passed by-laws levying certain fees on all the products of the farm sold anywhere within town limits. If a farmer sold a bag of wheat he paid ten cents. If his wife or daughter had a dozen of eggs or a pound of butter in her basket, she had to contribute a few cents to the town treasurer. Failure to comply with the by-law always led to a prompt interview with the mayor, which usually ended by augmenting the town finances

and depleting the wallet of the agriculturist by a corresponding amount. It is true that the corporation graciously granted the vendors from the country the privilege of exposing their wares in the filthy old rookery dignified by the name of the market building. The farmer's wife was bold indeed who could enter the doors of a place the air of which was redolent with the effluvia of the fertilizing particles which adhered to the decaying hides which were usually lying promiscuously here and there in its dirty chambers. Her only alternative was to remain outside in the summer heat or winter cold ; but in either case the town got its toll. Since the township had given free roads to every person who chose to use them, the representative of the township had made repeated efforts to have these obnoxious imposts removed, but without effect. At a meeting of farmers belonging to a certain association, three delegates were appointed to interview a committee of the town council for the purpose of coming to some agreement whereby the objectionable by-laws would be repealed. As might be expected, the town felt quite secure, and the committee of the council simply ignored the Blanshard delegates. But a solution of the difficulty was close at hand, and such a solution as no one ever expected. The action of Mr. Cathcart some years before in buying the gravel road leading into St. Marys was made the lever to solve the problem. An officer of the municipality, in a private conversation with Mr. Dinsmore, suggested the coercive measure of placing a toll-gate on the main road leading into St. Marys, which would have the effect of shutting off a large amount of the trade going to the town, and of course injure the interests of the citizens.



Mr. Dinsmore at once saw the opportunity and adopted the idea. When Mr. Cathcart bought the road he simply bought up the stock at sixty per cent. of the face value of the shares. He never surrendered the charter of the old company, and by retaining that right made the township of Blanshard the sole owners of the road. This action saved the whole scheme. After the toll-gate had been erected an action was attempted against the township by the town to compel the removal of the gate. It was held that according to the Municipal Act no township had the right to impose imposts of that kind. It was shown, however, that the township did not erect the toll under any right it might have under the Municipal Act, but by the rights given by the charter of the London and Proof Line Road Company, which company was now the township of Blanshard. This move, therefore, completely collapsed. The policy of placing a toll on this road, although very generally accepted by the people of Blanshard, met with a good deal of opposition in some sections. The members of the council were not by any means unanimous in the matter, two of the number being opposed to the movement. To the honor of James Dinsmore, William McCullough, and James Spearin, the two last of whom have passed away, they stood their ground like heroes, until the difficulty was settled to the entire satisfaction of both the municipalities. The St. Marys people did not yield without a struggle. The gate was kept on for two years and rented for a third, when one afternoon, to the inexpressible delight of the three gentlemen I have named, Mr. E. W. Harding, who, I think, was mayor of St. Marys at the time, came into the council hall at Blanshard,



prepared to settle the dispute. Mr. Harding had urged a settlement during the whole time of the difficulty, but had not been able to accomplish much, until a falling off in the business of the town touched the pockets of his constituents. A better man could not have been chosen to represent the town than Mr. Harding, and before he returned that evening the whole matter was arranged, and the lease of the toll-gate cancelled. During these two years the gate had been profitable to the people of Blanshard. A check was issued to every ratepayer, upon the presentation of which to the toll-keeper he was allowed to pass free. All outsiders had to pay. Thus the \$1,200 which the township received for the two years they kept the gate was contributed by the adjoining municipalities, and relieved the Blanshard ratepayer to a corresponding amount in his taxes. This little episode between St. Marys and Blanshard brought the market fee question so prominently before the people of Western Canada that the legislature of Ontario abolished forever this vexatious tax.

#### HIS LATER YEARS.

Mr. Dinsmore then retired from the council, having sat as reeve at this time for two years. On the 27th day of March, 1876, was organized the Blanshard Mutual Fire Insurance Co., on whose board of directors was Mr. Dinsmore, and which position he has retained, with the exception of one or two years, ever since. In 1885, if I remember right, he was again a candidate for the reeve's chair, his opponent being Wm. Hutchings, whom he defeated. He held the reeveship on this occasion for two years, when he retired. This

was his last appearance on the political stage of the municipality, having been in the harness almost continually from 1853 up to 1887, a period of thirty-four years.

We must now draw this imperfect biography to a close. Mr. Dinsmore, at the age of seventy-eight, is still strong and hearty. At his best he was never robust looking, but his muscles seemed like wires of steel. He was scarcely ever fatigued. Prolonged or severe labor affected him but little, and he had his share of both. In all his business relations he was prompt and strictly honorable. No man, during his whole career as an auctioneer, could ever accuse him of favoritism or dishonorable conduct. In the making of his accounts he rarely made mistakes, and he had to settle the whole transactions of a sale, amounting to hundreds of dollars, sometimes under the greatest annoyance. He knew men well and could not be imposed on. For a person naturally impetuous and energetic, all his business was transacted with coolness and calm deliberation. He had a wide circle of acquaintances, and as matter of course received many visitors, all of whom he entertained most hospitably. His independence was one of the strongest features in his character. He never decided a question, or was biased in any way, by the opinions of other men, no matter what may have been their standing in society; be they prophets, priests, or kings, all were alike to him. Men stood high or low in his estimation on the same grade as their manhood. Under the greatest provocation he preserved his equanimity. There appeared to be no excitable qualities in his nature that could be touched by the vilest asperities of his

traducers. This was one of the factors that gave him power.

He was Conservative in politics, but not intolerant. The democratic feeling which was strong in his nature had a subduing effect on his political thought; so much so that he would never sacrifice what he believed to be the interests of his country to any particular exigency arising in his party. He was strongly attached to his family and to his home, and would endure great hardship that they might be comfortable and happy. But to say that this man had no faults would be to say that he was more than human. He had faults and many great defects indeed. But his defects reacted upon himself rather than on those around him. We conceive, however, it is no part of the biographer to array the weak points of prominent men before the public eye. Nay, we rather conceive that the duty of the biographer is to place before his readers the good, the noble, and the true, that those coming after may take pattern by their conduct, and emulate their virtues.

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GUNNING BROTHERS.

JAMES.

WILLIAM.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE GUNNING BROTHERS.

JAMES.  
IN the south-west of England, along the southern shore of the Bristol Channel, lies Somersetshire, one of the most beautiful counties in that beautiful land—fertile, nearly all pasturable, and its climate soft and equable. The great plain of which it is composed is throughout the whole year a spot of surpassing beauty. The rose of England here blooms the fairest, and in the sequestered groves that deck the gentle slopes of the Mendip Hills, the nightingale, in harmony with the beautiful in nature, at eventide pours out to the gathering shades of night her ever-delightful song. Like nearly every corner of England, Somerset has historical associations. On the west, and near the banks of the Severn, stand the remains of the Abbey of Glastonbury. The vastness of the crumbling arches conveys in impressive silence to the tourist some idea of its grandeur at that period when the Church that laid its foundations was the Church of the world. Its long drawn aisles, its cloisters, its sacred altars, have long since been stripped of their glory and sunk in ruin and decay. The columns that supported the roof of the great edifice are broken and fallen, and the most splendid efforts of human invention and magnificent work of human hands fill its holy places in mockery of

the greatest achievements of men. The tongue of the great bell, that called the people to vespers as evening crept on in quietness and repose, speaks from the old tower no more. The tramp of the holy men, the acolytes, the chant of the sacred ceremony of the Mass, will never be heard again among these crumbling arches that seem to wait in silence the inevitable hour when they will topple over to increase the mass of rubbish at their base. Time, the great worker, while he has placed his destroying finger on those magnificent pieces of art, and thrown them again to earth, has to some extent repaired the work of his relentless hands by the profusion of flowers he has scattered everywhere. The vagrant flocks now browse peacefully in the halls of that splendid temple, or recline at noon-day in the shadow of its ruined walls. The lover of the beautiful must ever regret that the fanaticism of the reformers at that period of the Reformation should have led them on to destroy even the very symbols of the Church's greatness. But the human mind is a strange and complex machine, its actions being governed, in almost all cases, rather by an association of ideas than abstract principles. The Church had in the lapse of ages grown to immense power. This power had given birth to intolerance and arrogance. She had won for herself the highest place on earth. In that great unknown future she reached out her strong arm and opened or shut the doors of hell, and in her ineffable majesty rolled back or closed the gates of heaven.

In the centre of the shire, and south of the Mendip Hills, is the dreary waste of Sedgemoor. Here was fought the memorable battle between the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth and James II. This

noble and generous-hearted man commanded James's army against the Covenanters at their last final struggle at Bothwell Brig, where the Covenanters were completely cut to pieces. At the termination of that conflict, the Duke issued orders to spare the lives of all the poor people who were taken prisoners. Such orders were lost on such men as Dalzell, Johnston, or the cruel and bloody Claverhouse, who with the spirit of demons butchered in cold blood the men who were in arms for freedom and liberty of conscience. Subsequently the Duke, at the instigation of the Whigs of England, raised the standard of rebellion at Sedgemoor against the despotic government of James, where his army was defeated and he was found next morning hid among the reeds in a ditch on the battle-field. For his part in this affair he was moved to London and beheaded.

Such are the historical associations connected with Somersetshire, where, near the little town of Shipton-Mallet, were born the subjects of our sketch,—William, on the 27th day of October, 1820, and James, on the 12th day of November, 1831. As the lives of the two brothers have been so closely associated since they came to Canada, we will proceed in the first part of this sketch with the life of William, who at the present time resides on lot 3, concession 12, Blanshard.

#### WILLIAM GUNNING.

William Gunning was the son of a small farmer, but who, in connection with his small holding, carried on the business of burning lime. Like the ancestors of nearly all the pioneers of Blanshard, he was not blessed with a large share of this world's goods, and had a constant struggle to maintain out of his small earnings



his wife and family. Like almost all of the poor people in the Old Country, he was anxious that his family should receive such education as would fit them for the ordinary duties of active life. Accordingly the subject of our sketch was sent to school in Shipton-Mallet, where he remained, with the exception of such periods as his assistance was required on the farm, till he was fifteen years of age. As some of the younger brothers were then able to assist in the farm work, William was bound as an apprentice to a cabinet-maker for five years. For this five years of labor he, as was the custom at that time, received little or no remuneration. He continued to work at his trade for a few years, when, in 1842, his father died, his mother having also died in 1837. As the oldest of the family, he returned to his home and assumed the management of his father's business; but the laborious nature of the occupation and the small returns for his exertion soon led him to try some other field for his activity and energy. He therefore made arrangement for the care of his brothers and sisters, and on the first day of April, 1843, he left Bristol for America, determined to push his fortune in the West. After a passage of five weeks and four days he arrived at New York. But he had no idea of becoming a subject of Uncle Sam. He was a true Englishman, and thought then, as he does yet, that there is no country like the country of his birth. He stayed only a short time in New York, when he came to Oswego, crossed Lake Ontario in the steamer *Lady of the Lake*, and came to Toronto. Here he felt at home once more when he saw the flag of his country floating over the city, and in Canada he decided to remain. He sought and obtained work with a carpenter in York-

ville, named Mr. White, and who was an uncle of Wm. and Geo. White, of the tenth concession of Blanshard, and, I believe, of Mr. White, of White & May, St. Marys. With Mr. White Mr. Gunning worked for one year, when he removed to Chippawa, on the Niagara frontier, where he resumed his trade of cabinet-making and running an engine. He again left Chippawa and worked with a farmer at Queenston Heights, the first farming he had ever done in Canada. He had married at the age of 22 a lady in England, and who died shortly after he came to Canada in Yorkville, Toronto. In the fall of 1845 he again left Canada and went to England, where, on the 27th day of January, 1846, he married Miss Sarah Savior. This lady is a kind, industrious woman, and nobly assisted him in all the trials and hardships attending pioneer life. She was a good mother and infused into her family so much of her own love and affection that at the present time they are noted for their consideration for and abiding pleasure in the company of one another. To Mr. and Mrs. Gunning there were born eleven children—Samuel, living in Blanshard; Thomas, who died in 1881; Eliza (Mrs. John Parkinson), of Blanshard; Albert, on the homestead; Emily (Mrs. Heron), of Exeter; Louisa (Mrs. Squires), of Blanshard; Arthur, of Blanshard; Mary Rebecca (Mrs. Wilson), of Biddulph; Alice (Mrs. David Parkinson), of Usborne; Lucy, at home, and a little boy who died in infancy. After his second marriage Mr. Gunning at once returned to Canada and went to reside at Chippawa. Here he again found employment as a ship-builder on board a new steamer that was then being built there. On the completion of this vessel she was taken to Buffalo for the

purpose of being finally finished and painted, preparatory to beginning her regular trips on the lakes. On her trip from the dock in the Chippawa River an event transpired which nearly culminated in the most terrible disaster that had ever occurred in Canada. On a bright and beautiful morning, early in the spring of 1847, the ship was cut loose from her moorings and pushed into the stream, steering for the Niagara River. This vessel was considered a wonderful triumph of the ship-builder's art, and a great excursion was arranged to go on board and accompany her to Buffalo. The decks were crowded with people, and along the shore were gathered large crowds of spectators to see the great leviathan move out of the still waters of the Chippawa and into the broad Niagara. At length the hawsers were cast off, amid the cheers of the people on the shore as well as of the crowd on deck, and onward and outward she moved into the stream. She soon reached the current leading to the Falls, and her head was being turned up the river, when her engines stopped, and in spite of the best engineering skill on board, refused to move. The current at the mouth of the Chippawa is strong, and swung her bows in a few minutes down the river, and with increasing speed was carrying her downward to the terrible abyss of the Falls. In a moment all was changed. The happy crowd on board, who a few minutes before were sharing with each other their ecstasies of delight, broke forth in one heart-rending shriek that struck the strongest hearts numb with terror,—one wild, agonizing cry for help, where no help could be given, that soon died away into the dull delirium of despair. The crowds on the shore were helpless to give aid to the drifting ship as she moved

on with increasing speed to the fatal plunge over the Falls. At last, when all hope seemed gone from the doomed excursionists, the engines began to move. Every man took his post as with bated breath he watched the laboring machinery battling with the current, till, to the heartfelt relief of all, she began to make headway in the stream and soon was out of danger.

## COMING TO BLANSHARD.

After making several trips in this ship from Buffalo to Detroit, Mr. Gunning, in the fall of 1847, decided to commence farming for himself in the new country then opened up in the west. Mr. Street, a gentleman then residing in Niagara, had a large quantity of land in the township of Delaware, of which he wished to dispose. Mr. Gunning removed his wife to the city of London, from which place he walked to Delaware and inspected the lands of Mr. Street, none of which he was able to purchase, not having the necessary funds. On his return he casually met on the street a farmer who had a short time previously settled in Blanshard. This gentleman was so enthusiastic over the splendid soil and other natural advantages of that new section that Mr. Gunning decided at once to go and spy out the land for himself. He accordingly left London on foot and walked out to the township, and after satisfying himself as to the quality of the land, selected lot 3 in the 12th concession, where he has lived continuously ever since.

Having selected his farm, he had at once to get the necessary papers from an official of the Canada Company. To effect this he had to go to

Goderich, this being the nearest office at which he could transact his business. To Goderich he went, and on foot, a distance of nearly fifty miles. But those were the days when men faced difficulties with strong hearts and a determination to overcome them. All that could be accomplished by physical labor they proceeded to accomplish. Distance, hardship, trackless forests, had no deterring effect on the pioneer. The law of the survival of the fittest was amply proved in the new settlement. If the settler was not strong and robust he soon went to the wall. There was no opening for any line of business in a new country where all were poor. If a man could not chop, make log heaps, split rails, and live on pork and potatoes, he was of no use in the woods, and the sooner he removed the better. Mr. Gunning was equal to all these, and started for Goderich with a chunk of pork and some bread in his wallet, as happy as a lord. The first day he reached Clinton, and obtained quarters for the night at Rattenbury's Hotel. On the second day he reached Goderich, transacted his business and returned as far as Brucefield, where he again stayed for the night. The third day he reached home, or the place he intended to make his home in Blanshard. There was not a stick chopped on his new place. He had few near neighbors, but he entered with a will on the labor of building a shanty where he could bring his wife in the winter. The shanty was soon built, covered with troughs in the true style of that architecture, the walls chinked, a good coat of mud put over all, a huge fire-place made in one end, and, thus completed, was ready to receive his young wife. The change from the beautiful fields of Somerset to a shanty in Blanshard was great indeed.

But hope still led them on. It was easy to endure when endurance would be so amply rewarded. In the winter of 1847 and 1848 he chopped a fallow on the new farm, and was able in the spring to clear two acres, which he sowed in spring wheat and planted in potatoes. His small store of cash was by this time completely exhausted, and to obtain a little money it was necessary that he should go to some of the older settlements for that important purpose. He left in the summer of 1848, and naturally turned toward Niagara, where he had formerly been employed. He walked as far as Flamboro', and got employment in a saw-mill for a couple of months. It was then nearing the time for him to return and harvest his little crop of wheat. Unfortunately, however, the proprietor of the mill was unable to give him any money, and all he got at that time for his work was an attack of the ague. Under those circumstances his employer, by making extra exertions, was able to secure him a couple of dollars, with which he started on his return journey. The attack of ague was so severe that it took him five days to make the trip home, where on his arrival he was some time before he could do any labor of any kind. With the help of his brother James, who was now in Canada, he succeeded in securing the little crop on which they were to subsist till another harvest. In the February following he again returned to Flamboro' for the purpose of earning a little money as well as to try and recover what he had already earned. On this occasion he worked one month and was able at the same time to obtain something from his former employer. His remuneration was not in cash, but consisted of a pair of boots, a cow, some clover seed, and a barrel of salt.

The barrel of salt he sold to get some funds to pay his expenses home. His boots he wore on his feet, the cow he drove, and the clover seed he carried on his back. After an eventful journey of several days he at last reached Blanshard, completely exhausted but still carrying his clover and driving his cow. During the next summer he again set out for Flamboro' to earn money, and on this occasion he was more successful, having improved his financial condition to the extent of fifteen dollars. This was his most successful and his last trip to the old settlements to obtain ready cash. In the meantime his brother James had cleared and prepared for crop several acres, as well as having gotten the logs ready for a new barn. They had also bought a yoke of oxen, two young cattle, and a pig, and, all things considered, had fairly launched out on a career of prosperity.

The military spirit fifty years ago in Canada was exceedingly strong, and was cultivated by the settlers as well as the government to a high degree. Many of the settlers in the eastern part of the province remembered and had taken part in the war of 1812. A number of the settlers in Blanshard had taken part in the outbreak of 1837. The feeling of loyalty to the land of their birth, and of determination to stand by the old flag, was deep seated in the bosoms of the Canadians. Many of them had suffered on those two occasions for their devotion to British institutions and British freedom. Under her protecting hand they had been born, under her protecting hand they lived, and under her protecting hand they determined that Canada should remain. As loyal Canadians then, as loyal Canadians now, (and as loyal Canadians we hope and trust we



will always remain) they were proud of the Empire to which they belonged, and were prepared to defend her to the death. We believe that feeling exists to-day to a greater extent than ever before. We are proud to pay homage to our beloved Queen. The glory of the Empire reflects itself upon us. Her achievements on land and sea are dear to Canadians. In the quiet churchyards of those islands repose the dust of our fathers. Britain is the mother of our civilization, the defender of our rights, the guardian of our liberties; and the Canadian that would barter his privileges as a free-born citizen of the grand old empire for a position with a bombastic and ignorant democracy is unworthy of the great nation from which he sprang.

For the purpose of keeping up the military spirit among the people, all able-bodied men between the ages of twenty-one and sixty were enrolled in the militia and had to meet at some particular place once a year for training and instruction. In a former sketch (of Mr. Cathcart) we attempted to describe one of those gatherings on the flats in St. Marys. The meeting we are now to describe was one of the same description, but in a much more grand and extended form. The gathering in St. Marys embraced the military men of Blanshard and St. Marys only. In this case seven townships were concerned, and the camping ground was at Carronbrook, or what is now known as the village of Dublin. The Blanshard and St. Marys contingents were to rendezvous at Skinner's Corners, and march on foot from that point to Carronbrook and join the men from the north and west. The troops were commanded by Major Sparling and Mr. Cathcart as captain. On the day appointed, Mr. Gunning re-



paired to the mustering place with the usual supply of pork and bread stowed on his person. Of the gentlemen who composed the commissariat department no record can be obtained. The cuisine was, however, of the simplest description, although somewhat of an indigestible character. For breakfast the men had bread, pork and whiskey; dinner, whiskey, bread and pork; supper, bread, whiskey and pork. This bill of fare was simple indeed, but it was marvellous the effect it had on the men. Each repast was followed by an exhilaration and exuberance of spirits among the troops which an ordinary spectator would have considered incompatible with a ration of bread and pork. As to the quantity of each served, we cannot after an interval of fifty years exactly say. It is reasonable to suppose, considering the manners and the state of society at the time, that whatever the allowance may have been of the solids, the fluids were unstinted and plentiful. The order was at length given by the Major, "Forward, march!" and away trudged the old pioneer settlers through the dust and heat on their long, weary march of twenty-five miles, to learn the way in which fields were won. The summer sun swung low over the dark forest away to the west, and flung deep, dark shadows over the leafy woods as the men from the south, tired and dust-covered, drew near the camp at Dublin. Early in the afternoon the various corps from Hibbert, Logan and other townships had arrived and were bivouacked on the west side of the village, and were lounging in groups at their ease, discussing the events of the day. As we stated elsewhere in these sketches, the township of Blanshard was settled largely with emigrants from the North of

Ireland. Many of these old settlers were members of the Orange order before they came to this country, and those who were not actual members were strongly in sympathy with the Orange body. On the other hand, nearly the whole of the north-western portion of Hibbert, a large portion of Logan, as well as the village of Dublin itself, were settled with members of the Roman Catholic Church. Unfortunately for both parties, the feuds that existed between the admirers of the Prince of Orange and the sons of those men who had followed the fortunes of Brian Boru, had been brought with them to Canada and still burned fiercely in their bosoms. The Blanshard men, as a testament to their loyalty, had brought a flag on which was imprinted the hero of "pious, glorious and immortal memory." As might be expected, this was most distasteful to the sons of the Church, and aroused their deepest indignation. The old settlers, as a class, were not slow in showing their approval or disapproval of anything, in a manner most emphatic, and in this case the resentment of the Hibbert pioneers soon manifested itself in unmistakable demonstrations. On a bridge over the creek that flows past the village on the Huron road, along which came the Blanshard corps, a number of the Hibbert men soon stationed themselves, to dispute the passage into the camp of the troops from the south. This looked ominous to the southern contingent, but on they came like dauntless heroes to the fray. They had no sooner gained the bridge than they were met with a volley of stones, and the application of their stout cudgels by the Hibbert men soon brought to a stand the champions who were guarding the flag. Still they pressed on ; as one war-

rior was placed *hors de combat* another stepped into his place. A small party of the invaders moved up the stream for the purpose of crossing to attack the enemy in the rear, but as it was somewhat swollen they had to relinquish the attempt. Meanwhile another party had descended the creek for the purpose of crossing to operate on the right flank of the enemy, but they also failed in the attempt. Being thus unable to cross either on the right or the left, the whole force concentrated on the bridge, where the fight still raged with unabated fury. The noise, the shouting, the imprecations of the contending factions were terrific. Men were knocked down, trodden upon and cudgelled, until both parties retired completely exhausted. The Hibbert men still held the bridge. Mr. Gunning, who was not at all an excitable person, stood at some distance with a number of others and surveyed the field. A short time ago the writer had occasion to visit Dublin, and was introduced to an old gentleman who was present and took part in the fight on the bridge. His account of the affair was substantially the same as that which we have given—with this important difference, that while Mr. Gunning claimed a victory for his party, my Dublin friend says that his party “knocked the devil out of the Blanshard fellows.”

During the recital of the events of that engagement my aged friend became quite excited, as one scene after another passed in review before his mind's eye. We mildly ventured a remark that it was most unfortunate for the Blanshard heroes, that having the devil knocked out of them in such a summary way, there were no pigs in that new country in which he could find a resting place as of old, and he

was forced to return to his old quarters, where he has ever since held his ground in spite of the influence and efforts of clergy. The belligerents on both sides of the stream, completely worn out by their long march and their efforts at the bridge, had retired to the woods. Here and there among the brush heaps were little knots of men, calmly sleeping, in happy oblivion of all that had passed, while in other parts of the forest rang out on the ear of night the laugh, the jest, and the merry song of more restless spirits. The officers, however, were afraid that a new day would bring renewed energy and new cause of quarrel amongst the troops. They therefore spent a good portion of the night counselling with the leaders on both sides, and with such success that the real business of the camp proceeded without any further interruption. The sun next morning rose bright and clear, sending golden rays over the dark woods, and bathing the camp in a stream of glorious light. The reveille was sounded on a dinner-horn which was provided for the occasion. The men performed their ablutions in the little stream that ran through the camp, and having partaken of the morning ration of bread, pork and whiskey, fell into the ranks to perform the duties for which they had met. Not being a military man, I am unable to describe the various evolutions in which the troops were engaged during the day; but I have no doubt they were of a character such as would fit the participants for active service in defence of the country they all loved so well. On the third day the camp broke up, and all returned tired and weary to their humble homes, scattered here and there in the wild woods of the Huron Tract. So ended the great farce of battalion drill among the sedentary force of Canada of fifty years ago.

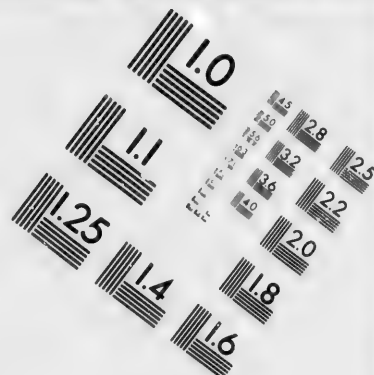
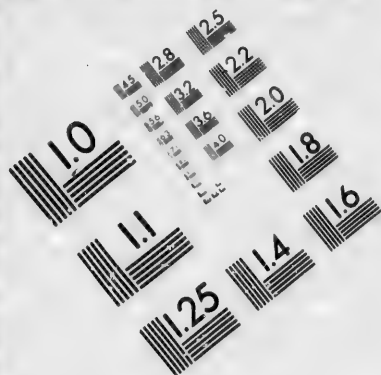
## ADVENTURE WITH A BEAR.

We must now revert to another circumstance in which the Gunning brothers were participants, and only for the merest chance I should have had one sketch less of the old pioneers to place before my readers. This was an encounter with a bear.

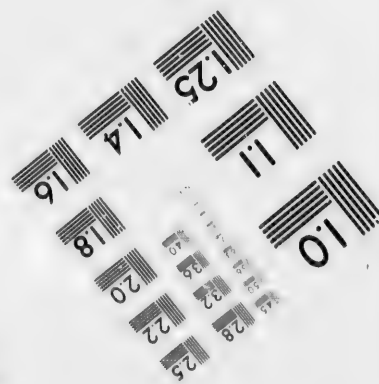
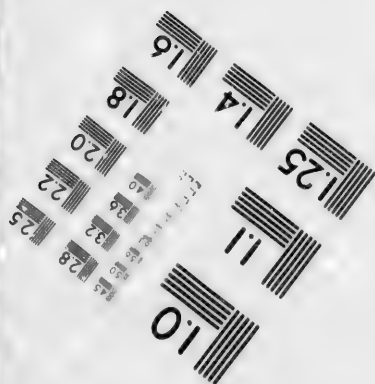
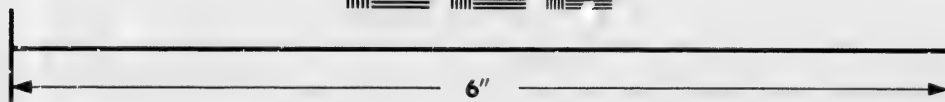
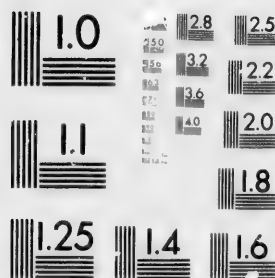
The southwest corner of Blanshard, unlike the other parts of the township, was exceedingly swampy and wet. For over two miles along the Usborne side of the west boundary, and parallel to it, ran a great marsh, which all along extended here and there across the townline into Blanshard. This corner was long known as the "jumping-off place" and was as uninviting in its appearance as a new country could possibly be. From the eighth concession along to where Whalen post-office now is, the road was nearly all corduroy. Beavers had at one time been plentiful in this section, and numerous dams still remain to attest the untiring energy of these laborers. Here and there they had made clearances, amounting in some cases to several acres in extent. After the removal of the large timber by those industrious little animals, an undergrowth of the white thorn and other scrubby timber had grown up to take its place. This afforded the best of shelter for wild animals, particularly bears.

An innocent pig, which was returning to his home after the day's foraging in the woods, offered a tempting morsel for bruin's empty stomach. He at once seized the poor pig, which in turn gave the alarm by his unearthly squealing. This brought the settler to his assistance, but he did not succeed in saving all his property, as bruin decamped with both the ears of the

poor porker. The settler, as soon as he could, informed the Gunnings, his nearest neighbors, who with a young lad, a son of Mr. Morley, started in pursuit of the bear. William armed himself with a gun, James took his axe, and with two dogs the hunt began. After beating for some time the dogs got the scent and followed the animal for some distance into what was then called the marsh—a piece of land which had been cleared by the beavers, but which was thickly grown with undergrowth. In this spot the dogs came up with the bear, which at once began to defend himself. James, who was younger than William, had out-run him in the pursuit, and arrived first on the scene. The dogs, encouraged by the presence of Mr. Gunning, closed in on the ferocious animal so closely that he struck at one of them with his paw and killed him on the spot. The other dog kept at safer distance, when the bear began to move toward James. William had now nearly reached the scene of action, and the bear coming toward James, he shouted to his brother to fire. William took aim and fired, the ball striking the animal in the shoulder, severely wounding, but not killing him. The brute then, more fierce than ever, sprang toward James, who struck at him with his axe. The wound in the shoulder by the ball that William had fired gave him a sort of rolling, uncertain motion, and as he sprang on James he miscalculated his distance, but caught him by the knee-cap, pulling him to the ground. Fortunately for him the bear had no sooner clinched his knee than he let go his hold. In a moment he was on his feet, but not any too soon, as the bear sprang once more at his antagonist, who still held on to the axe. The trusty steel fell once more, and



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this time with unerring aim, when its sharp edge crashed deep into the skull of the infuriated beast. All this occurred in less time than I have taken to write it, and William had by this time reached the place of struggle, and, clubbing his gun, they soon dispatched their victim. It was many months before James could use his limb, and the marks of this encounter he will carry to the grave.

The lynx or wild-cat was at that time quite numerous in this corner of the township. On one occasion the writer was returning from a neighbor's home at a somewhat late hour, and passing through a piece of swamp, was startled by a most unearthly sound in the wood near the roadside, and which he knew was the yell of a lynx. Being somewhat of a retiring and inoffensive disposition, he had no desire to win distinction by the destruction of a wild animal, as would no doubt have been the result of an encounter. The evening was beautiful and mild, but it occurred to him at once that the night was intensely cold and an increase of speed might add to his comfort. He accordingly tried to increase the distance as quickly as possible between himself and the spot from which the sound had emanated. Another blood-curdling yell produced an acceleration of motion, and he obtained a mark in his record on that occasion he has never been able to break since, and which, to those who know his deliberate and quiet dignity of movement of late years, would appear perfectly marvellous.

#### WILLIAM'S BLANSHARD FARMS.

But the whirligig of time brings round its changes. Years had come and gone and brought many altera-

tions in the conditions of the Gunning brothers. The oxen and the sled on which William made many trips to London with his produce, had given place to horses and wagon. The roads had been improved, and his surroundings furnished the clearest evidence of prosperity. He had no longer to walk to St. Marys as the nearest post office, nor had he to walk to London to consult his family doctor. His industry and thrift had been amply rewarded by a goodly portion of the world's goods. In the sixties he not only was the owner of lot 3, on the 12th concession, but he also owned lot 21, on the W. B., and lot part 5 and the whole of lot 6 in the 11th—between 300 and 400 acres of splendid land.

In 1869 he built the splendid residence on the homestead in which he at present resides, and was in every way a most prosperous man.

Before dismissing this part of our sketch we must not omit an event which occurred on January 27th, 1896. That was the golden wedding of William and Mrs. Gunning. This was a great occasion, and over one hundred guests sat down to a splendid repast served by kind hands in a splendid style. Numerous and costly presents were given to the old couple by their friends. Amongst those present were ten of their own children and thirty-six grandchildren (at time of writing they number forty).

James, who had resided with him since he came to Canada, decided to begin the battle of life for himself. Up to this time the lives of the two brothers had been inseparable. In 1855 James married Miss Savior, a sister of his brother's wife, and having built a shanty on lot 21, W. B. concession, commenced to clear on his new farm. This lot was not by any means a good

one, at that time being wet and swampy. But he soon made a change. By unceasing toil, and in spite of many adverse circumstances, he transformed it into one of the best farms in that section. He possessed in an eminent degree those qualities which lead to success in a new country. He was a master with the axe, and as corner-man on a building could not be excelled. As a natural consequence there were few log buildings in that section on whose corners could not be seen his handiwork. "Saddle and natch," "flat corner or dove-tail" to him were equally familiar, and he rarely missed taking a log from the "muleys," no matter how high the structure might be. As time passed away, his energy and thrift led to an increase in his world's possessions, and he is now the owner of 300 acres. Such success speaks volumes, not only as to the character of those clever, energetic men who have made this country, but it also proves the splendid opportunities and the results this country offers as a reward for honest effort and perseverance. In the year 1891 he had the misfortune to lose the mother of his children, who had struggled with him in the woods so faithfully and well. The issue of his married life are, Eleanor (Mrs. Leaf), of Manitoba; Robert, of Biddulph; Alfred, of Blanshard; Agnes (Mrs. Foster), of Blanshard; Sarah (Mrs. Ashton), of London; Fred, of Blanshard; Elizabeth (Mrs. Johnson), of Blanshard; Thomas, of Blanshard; Annie, at home; George, in Manitoba; and Francis Albert, of Blanshard.

A few years ago Mr. Gunning again married, and was fortunate in taking to his home a most estimable helpmate, in the person of Miss Janet Taylor. This lady now presides over his household with the

greatest kindness and consideration, and is equally esteemed by her husband and the whole family.

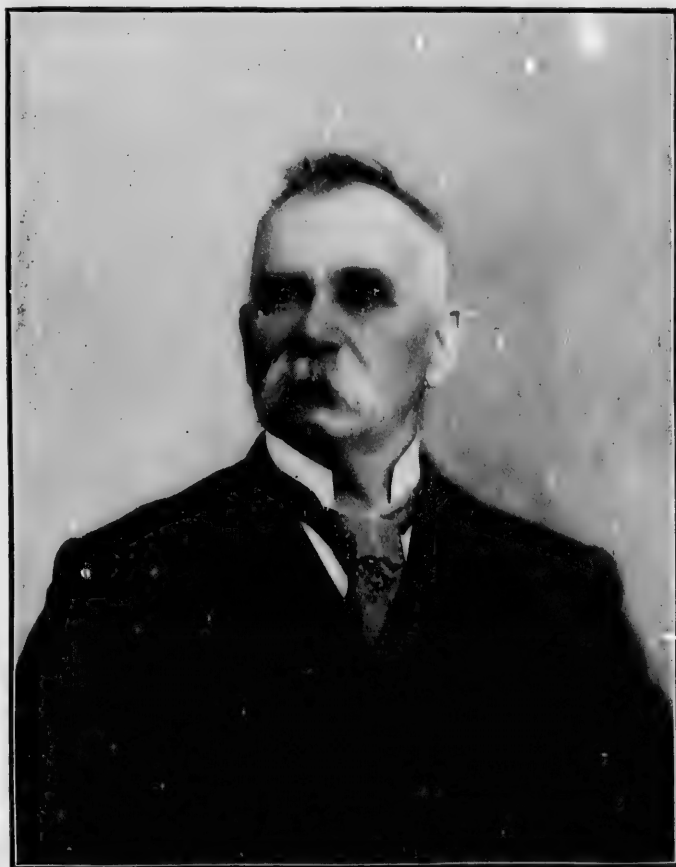
#### SOCIALLY AND MORALLY.

It would be hardly possibly to find two men more alike, not only as to their personal appearance, but as to their manner of thought and moral qualities, than the two gentlemen who form the subject of this imperfect sketch. Both are under the average size and sparely made, and yet possessed of powers of the greatest endurance and energy; their muscles seemed like wires of steel. They understood their business well, and were exceedingly tidy on their farms, having "a place for everything, and everything in its place." Equally industrious in their habits, always ready to help each other, the lives of both men have been a great success. Neither of the brothers had any desire for distinction in public life, and as a matter of course neither has ever sought or obtained public office.

Neither of them is fond of show, but both take great pride in having everything in the best possible condition on their farms. They are strictly sober in their habits, honorable and upright in their dealing, and discharge to the fullest extent the responsibility of citizenship. They are strongly Conservative in politics, believing the principles advocated by that party to be for the best interests of their adopted country. As politicians they are not blatant, being willing to accord to every man the right that they claim for themselves, that he should think and act according to the light that is in him. In religion they belonged to the Church of England, but of late years have attended the Methodist Church, it being more convenient to their families.

In their homes, like all other old settlers, they are kind and hospitable, and ready to help any good cause to the best of their ability. We have never seen two families in which so strong a bond of sympathy exists as exists in the families of the Gunnings. Their reunions are frequent and enjoyable. The good nature and the pleasure they seem to take in each other's company is to an outsider delightful indeed. The kindness and consideration of the young people in their home life, the simplicity of their amusements, the confidence in and love for each other, the good nature that seems to pervade all and crown all, impresses one with the feeling that there is really a great amount of good in the world after all. When we think of the cold-hearted selfishness and bitter strife, and the harsh treatment meted out to near relations in many homes, we turn with delight to such spectacles of endearing love for their aged parents and each other as we see in the two families of Gunnings. But we must draw this sketch to a close with the hope that the Gunning brothers may long be spared to enjoy the fruits of their toils, and when the final hour comes, as come it must to all, that they also will be found watching to welcome the grim messenger that shall call them to a higher life.

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WILLIAM FLESHER SANDERSON.

## CHAPTER XI.

W. F. SANDERSON.

THAT spirit of adventure which is one of the characteristics of the present age, and which has contributed so much to the development of mankind during the last fifty years, should, when properly directed, command our highest admiration. Without it many portions of our continent would still have been unexplored, where are now to-day large centres of population, actively engaged in all those pursuits which tend to develop the race and augment their capacity for enjoyment and happiness. This feeling, however, like other of the higher attributes of our nature, must be properly directed to secure for the individual the greatest advantages from its use. The man who from the mere love of change roams everywhere, without an aim or an end in view, is not likely to add very much to his own manhood, nor to contribute a great deal to those stores of knowledge which enhance the pleasures and dignify the life of civilized men. On the other hand, when we find an adventurous spirit surmounting great difficulties in the pursuit of fortune, in the cause of science, or in any of the many paths which rouse men to action, unselfish in its activities, ambitious in its various projects, observant and reflec-



tive in its nature, we instinctively accord it our highest esteem. Many such have come and gone in the woods of Canada, have lived and died, and beyond the circle of a few friends were unknown. Men whose minds an empire might have swayed, and whose aspirations placed them practically above the vicissitudes of fortune or the influence of environment, have found homes in the rude forest, where in calm seclusion they mused with ever widening philosophy on the forms of nature and the great problems of human life. To say that many of the old pioneers were men of the character indicated would be incorrect; but we do say that many old settlers could be found in the wilds of Blanshard whose natural ability and acquirements were as far in advance of the average as could be found in any society in Canada, or perhaps anywhere else.

#### HIS EARLY DAYS.

Amongst Blanshard's most gifted settlers was the subject of our present sketch. His character was unique, and in many of its aspects had no counterpart in the township. With the bluff courtesy of the Englishman was combined the quality of caution attributed to the Scotch; a clever reader of the character and thoughts of other men, he is an adept at counselling his own, is possessed of great powers of observation, and correct in all his conclusions; from the refining force of his reflection, he has consummate tact, an affectionate manner, and such liberality toward the opinions of others that he has for years been one of Blanshard's most popular men.

William Flesher Sanderson was born on the 23rd

day of October, 1835, in the city of Bradford, Yorkshire, England. His father, the Rev. William Sanderson, like the greater portion of the clergy in England, was frequently moved from one charge to another, and his son, as a matter of course, had many changes in schoolmasters after he had reached school age. Notwithstanding the itinerance inseparable from his father's calling, Mr. Sanderson was able to secure, before he reached his fifteenth year, a fair English education. But the spirit of enterprise and adventure which characterized his conduct during the active period of his life manifested itself at this early age, and in spite of the tears of his mother and kind solicitations of his father, he determined to cross the Atlantic and seek his fortune in the wilds of Upper Canada, as Ontario was then called. He therefore, on the 1st day of May, 1850, left his father's roof, where he was destined never to enter again, and sailed from the St. Catherines docks in the city of London for Quebec. In the bark *Ethelred*, under Capt. McLeod, he made a successful voyage in five weeks and four days.

## ARRIVES IN QUEBEC.

During the trip the ship experienced severe weather, and the cargo shifting, the little vessel nearly capsized in mid-ocean. Mr. Sanderson did not, however, realize the danger of the situation. He was young, and with all the recklessness and buoyancy of youth rather enjoyed the excitement among the crew arising from the gravity of their situation. Mr. Sanderson sailed from Quebec to Montreal on the *John Munn*. At Montreal he again secured a passage and came on to

Toronto. Leaving that city he went northwest, and spent about eighteen months in the vicinity of Bolton village and Port Rowan. This section did not apparently satisfy his ambitions, and he came on farther west to the city of London. So far, since he left the home of his parents, he, like nearly all young lads of his age, took life with a light heart and an utter disregard for the future. Those ties and associations which gather around men as life passes away had not yet fastened themselves on him, and wherever he happened to be, that spot was for the time his home.

Shortly after his arrival in London he casually met a couple of gentlemen from Blanshard, one a Mr. Miller, who was father of William Miller, ex-treasurer of the township, and Mr. McCullough, who then resided on the farm now occupied by Mr. Pearn, on the 2nd concession. From these gentlemen he received the most glowing accounts of the township of Blanshard, and he at once formed the resolution of coming into the locality and seeing it for himself. On the 1st day of April, 1852, he started on foot, and the same night found him in St. Marys, snugly quartered in the hostlery known long after as the National Hotel. This hotel was kept at that time by two tailors named McIntyre and Sutherland, who had laid aside the needle and the goose, and had exchanged the business of constructing garments for the physical comfort of their patrons, for the supply of spirituous libations to satisfy their thirst. The climatic conditions at that time seem to have been much as they are at present, for on that 1st day of April an icy rain had so covered the trees as to spread distraction everywhere and gave to the whole country a desolate and uninviting appearance.

## COMES TO WOODHAM.

During the period of his residence near Bolton village he made the acquaintance of a family by the name of Stearns, who had in the meantime removed to Blanshard. He accordingly went to the home of his former friend, and with him he worked on the farm the following summer, thus receiving his first training in the laborious occupation of chopping and clearing land. In the fall he purchased one hundred acres of bush himself in the township of Usborne, adjoining the village of Woodham (the site of which was then all woods), built a log shanty, laid in a supply of provisions, which meant pork, potatoes, and tea, and commenced chopping; his sole companions for the long winter being a fox-hound and his own thoughts. When we consider that this lad, who had spent his whole life among people of politeness and refinement, and wholly unaccustomed to labor, should have left his home and wandered away into the woods in the back settlements of Canada, and imposed upon himself such hardships as were inseparable from a backwoods life, his conduct appears marvellous. To those who were born in the humbler walks of life, trained from their youth to work and associate with men used to toil, the labor of clearing land was not by any means so oppressive; but to him it must have been a sad change indeed.

During the long winter he, to relieve the tediousness of his lonely condition, frequently indulged in hunting expeditions. On one of these occasions he found three bears, who, no doubt instinctively to secure themselves from such a famous disciple of old Nimrod, had

betaken themselves for safety to the branches of a tree. Being unable to dislodge the beasts, he secured the assistance of a gentleman, a tailor by trade, who resided near him. This person had a gun, a terrible implement of death, and considered a fine weapon for large game, as she did not "scatter," but carried her shot compactly into whatever object at which she might be discharged. The three started for the bear tree, viz., Mr. Sanderson, the tailor, and the gun, with blood in the eyes of the two gentlemen and death in the barrel of the piece. By some mishap, however, the lock of the firearm had been injured, so that the hammer would not remain in position when drawn back; and when she was used the gunner always had an assistant to hold it back while he took aim, and at the word "fire," the assistant let go the hammer, when if the game did not scamper away, it was likely to get hurt. The bears still sat in the tree in happy unconsciousness of the measures taken for their destruction. The knight of the needle took aim with the gun, while the duty of Mr. Sanderson, as assistant, was to hold back the hammer. At the word "fire" he let go, when the bears descended the tree precipitately, apparently annoyed at such unsportsmanlike conduct. At this denouement, the tailor threw away the gun, and with his assistant started pell-mell for the shanty, falling over logs and brush in their retreat. Neither of the hunters spoke or looked round until safely inside the walls of the building and the door securely bolted, when mutual congratulations were exchanged for their happy deliverance.

During this same winter another event transpired which exemplifies the character of Mr. Sanderson in a

marked degree. He was chopping in the woods when he heard terrific cries from a neighbor's fallow. Repairing to the place whence the cries for help still proceeded, he found a Mr. Tyreman had given his foot a fearful cut with the axe, an accident which, by the way, was common in those early days. He assisted the man to his shanty, and having secured a needle, sewed up the terrible gash as well as he could. Having completed this surgical operation, and his patient resting as easily as possible, they were startled by the blood spurting from the wound with such force that the poor sufferer was given up for lost, and death was expected. Mr. Sanderson ran to the house of Mr. James Nagle, who then resided in Usborne, who promptly came and made the last will and testament of what all expected was a dying man. The flow of blood being somewhat abated, it was decided to send for a doctor. No medical man lived nearer than St. Marys. There was no horse in the settlement, and on that cold winter night Mr. Sanderson walked to St. Marys on foot to obtain medical aid for a person who at that time was to him almost an entire stranger. The distance was twelve miles, and he arrived next day at two o'clock with Dr. Thayer, the only doctor in St. Marys at that time, who properly dressed the wound, and the man ultimately recovered.

In the spring it became necessary to have a yoke of oxen to log his fallow, and hearing that Mr. Henry Morrill, who resided on the base line, had a yoke to dispose of, he went there and found that he had not only an excellent yoke of cattle, but also a prepossessing daughter, just budding into womanhood. The oxen were purchased and taken home, yet, notwithstanding

the best of care and attention, would persist in wandering every now and then to their old quarters. Of course they had to be brought back, which would have been somewhat annoying had it not been that invariably these journeys were rewarded by a little chat and an occasional smile from the young lady of the house. Buck and Bright, the names by which all oxen were called, continued taking their periodical trips until they had succeeded in making the young couple intimately acquainted with each other. Thinking, no doubt, that they had done their part in the affair, and that the rest could be accomplished without them, they discontinued their visits. And so it turned out, for the intimacy that had so happily sprung up between their present proprietor and their former owner's daughter, ripened into courtship; and on August 1, 1853, he led to the altar Miss Martha Helen Morrill, aged seventeen years, when the nuptial knot was tied and they were made man and wife, their united ages being thirty-five years.

Some time prior to their marriage he purchased the west half of lot No. 7, on the 6th concession, Blanshard, where he built a home, into which he took his young wife, and never again resided on his property in Usborne. Of this union there is no issue. Mrs. Sanderson, young and inexperienced as she was at the time of her marriage, has proved herself an excellent helpmate, and nobly assisted him in all his efforts to carry out successfully his schemes either for his material or political advancement. On this farm he continued to labor and make improvements, until he finally sold it to Mr. Amos Marriott, who owned the adjoining property and purchased the place on which he at present resides.



## THE OLD LOG SCHOOL-HOUSE.

About the year 1855 or 1856 he was honored by the first mark of public confidence he ever received from the people, by being elected to the office of school trustee, in which capacity he served for six years. At that time the old log school-house, which had been erected when the country was nearly a wilderness, was found, after the settlement had extended to the west, to be entirely inconvenient and far away from the centre of the section as at that time constituted. The old building stood on the identical site on which Cooper's church now stands. An agitation sprang up in the west end to remove or erect a new building in the centre of the section. Mr. Sanderson espoused the cause of the western ratepayers, and succeeded in carrying a resolution authorizing the trustees to erect a new building during the year, farther to the west. However, before anything had been done, the council undertook to remodel the school sections in the township, so that the buildings would have to be erected mid-way between the concessions on the sideroads. This move of the council was violently opposed by the ratepayers generally, and particularly by those on the upper end of the base line. Public meetings were called to discuss the matter, when arguments in powerful and emphatic language were hurled from one side to the other by the opposing parties. Mr. Sanderson at one of these meetings was appointed to interview the council, and try to arrive at a solution of the difficult question. This was the first time he had ever been within the doors of the council chamber. The Hansard not having been introduced in Canada at that time, no



record has been preserved of the speeches on that occasion. He pointed out to the board, however, that the swamp between the base-line and the site where the buildings would be erected would have to be navigated by a boat, as the water in the fall was usually three or four feet deep. In the winter, when the boat could not be used, there would be no road at all. He also pointed out to the assembled wisdom that no ratepayer would be guilty of such barbarous conduct to his children as to send them into the woods to a school where in the summer they would have the last drop of blood sucked out by mosquitoes and the last morsel of flesh picked off their little bones by flies. The council sat with that respectful gravity for which the members of the Blanshard board have always been noted when addressed by the people, but admitted the matter had gone too far to stop, and the people would have to make the best of it. This was an easy way to dispose of the question, surely. The people on the 8th concession took action immediately by organizing and letting the contract of building a school-house, the site selected being on the dividing line between the lots owned by Captain John Campbell and Fletcher D. Switzer, on the upper side-road. The mechanics were soon at work, and the sound of the axe and the hammer, as it came echoing through the woods to the base-line, was doubtless provoking, but was borne in sullen silence by the opposing party. At last on a calm, still night, when the moon's pale light shone softly o'er hill and dale, and the building was nearing completion, there came a mighty crashing sound like the roar of an avalanche, that roused the whole neighborhood from their slumbers, particularly those on the head of the base-line. Next

morning people met each other with faces white with fear, asking each other if they had heard the terrible noise. Apparently they all had, but none could assign a cause. As the day advanced, however, it became known that the new school-house had been literally torn to pieces and smashed into kindling wood. The havoc wrought on that calm, still night was looked upon by the base-line people as a special interposition of Providence, and that some superhuman power had been brought into play to assist them in their extremity. The people on the 8th concession were, and always remained, skeptical on this point, arising no doubt from their materialistic tendencies. Be the cause what it may, it stopped forever the insane idea of building our school-houses on the sideroads. In the following year the Board of Trustees on the base-line, composed of Mr. Sanderson, Mr. Cathcart, and Mr. Gooding, erected in the centre of the section on the base-line the first brick school-house ever erected in the township of Blanshard.

Another incident which occurred about this time will bear repeating. The old settlers (happily for society) brought with them into the woods a heart-yearning desire for those sacred ordinances and spiritual consolations on the perpetuation of which must ever rest, as on a sure foundation, the structure of civilized life. To their humble homes, and to the rude log buildings here and there erected in various parts of the township, good and self-denying men picked their way through forests and dispensed the bread of life to the little congregations of the early settlers.

At a very early day an Orange hall had been

erected on the corner of Mr. David Brethour's farm, on the base-line, and in which religious services were held. If the accommodation was poor it was the best that could be obtained. Planks laid across blocks of wood were used for seats, not only for the congregation, but for the minister as well. On this particular night the little place was crowded; and when the subject of our sketch entered, he was shown to a seat on the platform where a plank had been placed for the minister, and on the centre of which the good man was sitting, preparatory to beginning the service. On the farther end of the plank he had placed his hat, a fairly good plug. Mr. Sanderson reverently took his seat on the other end. On the minister rising to begin the service, down went Mr. Sanderson's end and up went the other, hoisting the plug hat up to the ceiling with great force, and finally landing it back among the congregation. Our friend still stuck to the seat, when the farther end, on which had stood the hat, swung round over the heads of part of the worshippers, who in looking up saw, not the spirit descending on them like a dove, but the swaying end of a two-inch plank. At length order was restored, he was relieved from his position, and the service proceeded.

#### ARMED WITH A PASSPORT.

In the spring of 1863, with the adventurous spirit that characterized him, we find that he had rented his property in Blanshard, and was on his way to the Pacific coast, by the old pioneer route of Panama. He was sailing through Cuban waters at the time when that noted privateer, the *Alabama*, captured the American steamer *Ariel*. After crossing

the Isthmus, smallpox broke out among the passengers, when the ship had to run into Porto Rico and put the sick ashore. By this means they were allowed to pass the Golden Gate into San Francisco with a clean bill of health.

It may seem strange to our readers that in the year 1864, in the highly civilized country of the United States of America, a traveller from a foreign country could not pass through their territory without a passport to insure him from detention and secure his safety. We are apt to commiserate the people on the continent of Europe who are constantly tormented with passports in moving from place to place, but we did not think that it would ever be necessary on this side of the Atlantic to take such precautions. We find, however, that on March 28th, 1864, it is certified "that the bearer, William Flesher Sanderson, whose signature I have caused to be placed in the margin hereof, is a British subject on his way to California. Signed, Josias Bray." Then follows a description of Mr. Sanderson as he appeared in the flesh thirty-five years ago: "Age, twenty-eight; height, five feet six inches; weight, 160 pounds; color of hair, light brown; color of eyes, light grey; complexion, fair." Attached to this document we find that John D. Irwin, United States Consul at Hamilton, Upper Canada, further attests that he was present and saw the annexed document signed by Josias Bray and Mr. Sanderson; and faith and evidence should be given to the said paper, as Mr. Irwin further certifies that the signature of Mr. Bray was genuine. In witness whereof Mr. Irwin sets his hand and the seal of the consular agency at Hamilton, Upper Canada, on the 28th March, 1864, and of

the independence of the United States. Armed with these papers, Mr. Sanderson accordingly proceeded on his way to the Pacific Coast.

#### IN THE MINING CAMP.

At this time the mining camps of Washoe were the centre of attraction, and thither our subject bent his steps, passing through California, across the Sierra Nevada Mountains, by way of the Hennis Pass, into the adjoining territory of Nevada. Here he finally settled at Virginia City, in the world-famed Comstock lode, having walked every foot of the way in company with four others from the City of Sacramento, a distance of 217 miles. Each man carried his outfit and some provisions. This was made into a bundle which he carried on his back, held by a strap which passed across his breast. One evening when they reached the summit of the Hennis Pass, and in the region of everlasting snow, they were so fatigued they could proceed no farther. To have lain down on their blankets would have been certain death from exposure to the intense cold in such high altitudes. They fortunately found a small cabin built of boards, where they each paid a dollar for the privilege of spreading their blankets on the floor, where they might rest for the night. In the morning they set out again on their dreary way, and pushed on toward the Eldorado where all expected to find gold.

The city of Virginia at this time was composed partly of tents and partly of buildings, and was the liveliest camp on the face of the earth. There was no difference then between night and day, Sunday or week day, so

far as work and amusements were concerned. Some danced all night, some gambled all night, and some worked all night, changing places with each other for a rest. There were also churches there and a few good people doing their utmost trying to stem the torrent of vice and bloodshed. But notwithstanding their best efforts, many, very many indeed, were laid to rest in the graveyard across the Gould and Currie ravine, slain by a brother's hand. Law at this time was set at defiance. The courts were helpless; every man went armed, and not until the vigilance committee went to work in good earnest, hanging men up by the neck, ticketed with the committee's initials 602, was there any reformation.

Not long after the organization of this committee, an opportunity offered itself for a display of their ghastly operations. A young man by the name of Perkins had received from one of the frequenters of the saloons what he supposed was an insult, and, in the true spirit of the place, at once drew his revolver and shot his opponent on the spot. This young person was a piano player in what was known as Scott's dance house, one of the hells in Virginia City. This man the committee determined should be their first victim. On the night following the committal of the crime he had retired to his room and was preparing to undress, and had removed one of his shoes. The committee entered his chamber, seized the young fellow, and partly undressed as he was, bore him off to the place of execution decided upon, where he should expiate with his life the crime he had so recently committed. He begged piteously for his life, or for such time as to write to his mother, who was far away in the east, perhaps at that very moment

thinking of her son. But prayers and supplications were lost on the unrelenting hearts of his murderers, and with the shoe removed from one of his feet, and the other still on, he was led to the place selected for his execution. This was at a mine contiguous to the city. At the entrance, where the drift penetrated the side of the mountain, a frame-work was erected to prevent the earth falling on the roadway beneath it. Under the frame-work a wagon loaded with ore was drawn, and the culprit placed thereon. A rope was fastened to the frame over head in the mine and round the man's neck, when the wagon was withdrawn and the poor fellow launched into eternity and ticketed as the first offering of the number 602.

That such a state of affairs should exist within the territories of what we consider as one of the most highly civilized nations in the world, indicates in a marked degree the carelessness and neglect by the central authority of the highest functions of government—the protection of the lives and property of its citizens. The triumvirs of the French Revolution were not more potent for evil than this association which had adopted for its trade mark the number 602. It made its own laws, reached out its irresistible arm for the victim, was its own judge and jury, condemned the culprit, and led him to execution. The state of society must have been deplorable that sought its safety in the power of such a tribunal. Indeed, so callous had the people become to the waste of human life that the two daily papers published in Virginia City, when no murder had been committed during the night previous, had in their leading column in the morning, printed in large letters, "No man for breakfast this morning."



We would not have dwelt on this subject to so great a length but as a warning to any of our young and adventurous Canadians who may read this sketch, to consider well before casting in their lot in a country where such a state of things could exist. Let them contrast the position of the Yukon with that of Virginia City. Many of these old prospectors who had played their part in the scenes described attempted to establish the same state of thing in the Yukon ; but there they found British justice meted out by that arm which is ever ready and always able to maintain order and protect the lives and property of her humblest citizen, not only within her own borders, but in every corner of the earth.

On a beautiful quiet summer evening, the subject of our sketch, having completed the labors of the day, had retired to his cabin for the night. Sitting alone by the fire and ruminating no doubt on his past adventurous life, and building air castles in the future, he was aroused from his reverie by a knocking at the cabin door. He made hasty preparations to receive his visitor, as was the custom in that country, by examining his arms to see if they were in condition to meet the worst. Whether it passed through his mind that he might be wanted for a sign-board where the No. 602 might be tacked on or not we are unable to say. He cautiously unbolted the cabin door, and there stood before him a tall, lean, bony man, with a slouch hat, who at once extended his hand, grasped Mr. Sanderson's, and shook it vigorously. This man was Mr. John Hannah, from Kirkton. The surprise of both men, and the congratulations that passed between, may be imagined. After a pleasant chat about Blanshard



and old times, Mr. Sanderson, being a true Englishman, set about making preparations for a great feast next day, it being the Sabbath. His larder not being richly provided, he, in company with his guest repaired to the city, where he intended to lay in a supply of mutton and beans for dinner. As they were walking along they stepped into a gambling saloon, where Mr. Hannah could see for himself the style of living in Virginia City. As they stood near one of the tables, a tall, respectable looking gentleman came forward, and placing his hand on the table, happened to lean on one of the men engaged in play. This man pushed the gentleman somewhat rudely away, when without a word being said on either side, he drew his pistol, fired, and shot the player dead. Mr. Hannah, who had lived his whole life among the quiet shades of Fish Creek, was horrified, and left the saloon in terror.

Mr. Sanderson having secured his mutton and beans, they returned to the cabin, where, after conversing on old times till the night was far advanced, they retired to their repose. In the morning Mr. S. was astir bright and early, attending to his duties, and making preparations for a great dinner. The mutton and beans were placed in the oven and a blazing fire built in the fire-place. Both gentlemen were enjoying themselves rehearsing the many scenes incident to backwoods life in Blanshard, and forgetting the roast. At last Mr. Hannah drew attention to a great smoke proceeding from the the oven where the meat and beans were cooking. On opening the door it was found that the food had taken fire from the excessive heat. The host rushed to the stove, grasped the savory dish, drew it out and in his haste spilled the

whole contents on the cabin floor. This was a sad catastrophe, but he was equal to the occasion. He seized a ladle, scooped up the savory particles, and served them up in his best style. Of course he scooped up more than mutton and beans, but the pieces of clay that ground in their teeth as they enjoyed their repast seemed only to give zest to what was declared by both gentlemen as an excellent dinner. Some time after these events another gentleman from Kirkton appeared on the scene in the person of Mr. William Hannah, brother of J. Hannah, who was father to John and William Hannah, at present residing on the old place between Woodham and Kirkton. This unfortunate and kind-hearted man, shortly after coming to Gold Hill, lost his life in one of the drifts. Mr. Sanderson, with the true Canadian spirit, obtained his body, prepared it decently for burial, and reverently laid it in its last resting-place.

## IN HASTINGS COUNTY.

In 1866 we next find the subject of our sketch, who, in the meantime had been joined by his wife, making his way out of Mexico, as war had broken out in that country. On reaching the city of Acapulco, on the coast, they were kindly proffered the protection of the Post Captain of the French fleet, which had just captured the Fort in the interest of the ill-fated Maximilian, and which offer they cheerfully accepted. Setting sail again, it was the 9th of August before they reached the Isthmus, in the midst of the rainy season. Here Mr. Sanderson was seized with the Panama fever, which kept him very low during the rest of the

voyage and for some time after he reached New York. He finally, however, reached his home in Blanshard in safety. With restored health was also restored that spirit of adventure which in him was ever restless. He was now in the prime of life, full of that energy which urges men on to seek fame and fortune at any cost. In the county of Hastings the gold fever had broken out. Some prospectors had discovered that the precious metal existed there in paying quantities; and thither he went, continuing over twelve months in search of gold, but without any degree of success. During his residence in Hastings county there lived near him a poor Frenchman, a laborer, one of whose children died during a severe snowstorm in that inhospitable country where the gold mines were located. The little child was about twelve months old, and the parents in indigent circumstances. A coffin was made out of such material as could be procured on principles of economy. The Frenchman, being a Roman Catholic, could not bear the thought of having his little one laid in the earth without a clergyman being present. No clergyman of his own Church being within reach, Mr. Sanderson procured the services of a Protestant minister, which appeared to satisfy in some degree his desire that the rites of Christian burial should be performed over the body of the little one. Mr. Sanderson had the only horse and cutter in the locality, and he took the little coffin with him to the graveyard. The few people that were present had reached the place of interment by a shorter route than he was able with his horse to take, owing to the drifts. He accordingly tied his horse to the fence at some distance from the grave, and taking the coffin in his

arms, walked over the snow to the fence, which he proceeded to climb. He had no sooner mounted it than it gave way, and the coffin falling, broke open, and the little corpse rolled out in the snow. At this state of things he was horrified, but he took up the little body, wiped the snow from its pale face, and adjusting the cerements that covered it, placed it again in the receptacle and moved on to the grave. Here they nailed the lid as well as they could and consigned the little inanimate form to its kindred earth.

#### HIS MUNICIPAL CAREER.

Not being successful in the county of Hastings, he returned to Blanshard for a short time, when he again left for the Pacific coast, certain interests he had in some of the mines in that country demanding his attention. He did not remain long, however, and having arranged his affairs, came back to Canada, and in 1874 returned to his native England to visit his widowed mother for the last time. Here he stayed three months, when he again returned to Blanshard, where he has resided continuously ever since. He did not remain long idle in his home. The people at the nomination of 1878 placed his name on the nomination paper for that year as councillor in the township. He was elected and sat for one year in that capacity. In 1879 he was elected deputy reeve. In 1880 he was again elected deputy reeve, and again in 1881. In 1882 he was elected reeve, and the same year he was elected warden of the county. In 1883 he was defeated in his election for the reeveship, and was again elected 1884, since which time he has never been an aspirant for town-

ship honors. He has served the municipality ever since, a period of the time as auditor, and has been a member of the Board of Health since its inception. In 1885 or 1886 he was elected on the Board of Directors of the Blanshard Mutual Fire Insurance Company, and the same year was made president of that institution, which position he has held ever since. He is a director and salesman of the Blanshard Cheese Company, on the base-line, and for his service in this connection was presented by the company a few years ago with a handsome acknowledgment of his services. At the introduction of the New Municipal Act, forming the county into districts, in 1897, he was nominated, with Mr. Monteith, of Downie, the member elect for South Perth, as the first commissioners for District No. 4. Both gentlemen were elected, and at the nomination for 1899 and 1900 the same gentlemen were elected by acclamation. About five or six years ago he received from Her Majesty a commission as J. P. in and for the county of Perth. In all these various positions of trust which he has held, we believe he has discharged his duty honestly and well, and has the satisfaction of knowing that if he has erred it has been through lack of judgment and not from intention.

#### HIS SOCIAL QUALITIES.

With the exception of Mr. Cathcart, he has been, perhaps, as popular as any of Blanshard's public men. He had the faculty in an eminent degree of gaining the confidence of men, and what was of equal importance to his success, he had the tact to retain it. This arose from his native kindness and an equanimity of charac-

ter and temper which could hardly be excelled. It made little difference what may have been said by his opponents, he still came forward with the same smile and the same shake of the hand. In his contests he was always cool, calm, and collected, and his whole nature seemed as placid and quiet as a summer sea. We never saw him, even when hardly pressed, ever indicate by word or action the slightest temper. He is polite and affable in his communications with the public, and in private his conduct is of that refined character that we almost invariably find in the sons of the manse. As a public speaker he is far above the average, although he lacks that fire which seems to rouse men's dormant energies into life and stimulate them to action. He is always pleasing, his language exceedingly good, his sentences well rounded, is a good reasoner, and has the faculty of saying nice things in a nice way and at the right time. In listening to his speeches you feel pleased with him and pleased with yourself, but you miss the tingling sensation aroused in your bosom by that overpowering energy and heat which some speakers have the power of throwing into their addresses. He is a jovial companion at the social board, can tell a good story and sing a good song, and in every way is both able and willing to contribute his share to the enjoyment of the company. As a farmer we cannot rate him very high. Although everything around his farm is kept tidy and neat, still we do not think that running a farm is his forte. He was far too adventurous to remain on a farm, and if he has made it his home all his life, still we think that he did it rather from force of circumstances than from a heart-felt love for the occupation. He is below the average height,

and in his youth was slightly built, but we might now adapt Mr. Mulock's postage-stamp motto to his upper garments, "We hold a vaster empire than has been."

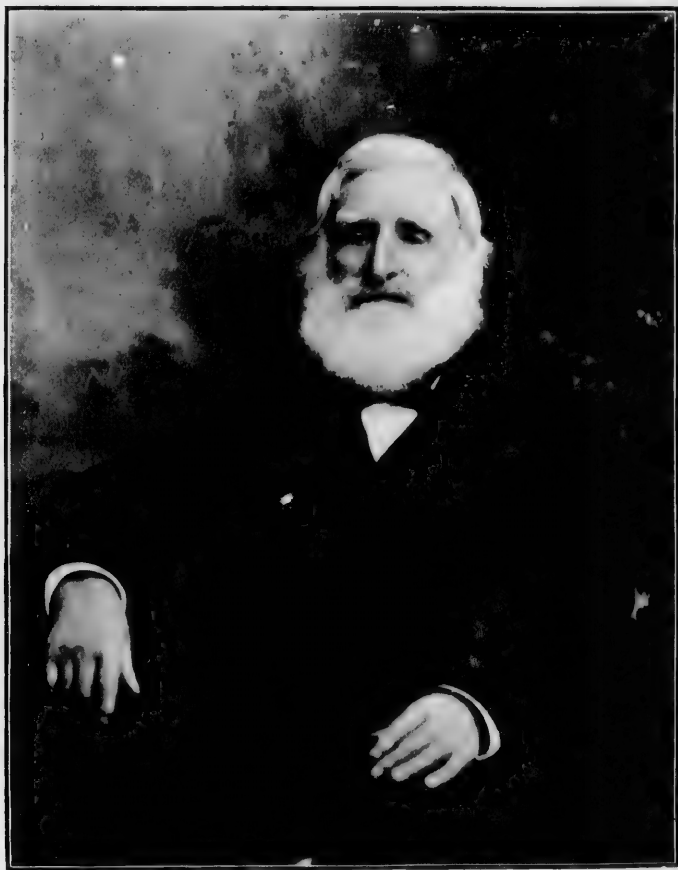
He is a good entertainer, with the happy faculty of putting his guests at their ease, and he caters to their comfort with the most generous hospitality. In politics he is independent, claiming alliance with neither of the two parties. He is not offensive in forcing his opinions on others, but when discussions arise, as they sometimes do, he can enforce his ideas with dignity and firmness. In religion he is liberal, believing that such things should be left between God and men's own consciences, and that they should worship at whatever altar they may think fit.

But we must now close this imperfect sketch of the life of a very remarkable and popular man.

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REUBEN SWITZER.

## CHAPTER XII.

## REUBEN SWITZER.

**B**ETWEEN fifty and sixty years ago, the subject of our present sketch joined that great stream of emigration from old Ireland seeking fortune in America, and which stream still continues to flow, although perhaps in somewhat diminished volume. All of that great tide of humanity shared this one great and predominating feeling, that "they left dear old Ireland because they were poor." In their native land they saw no prospect of bettering their condition. Their lives so far had been one constant struggle, and notwithstanding the most rigid economy and thriftiness, they had still remained on the ragged edge of poverty. In all the cabins surrounding their own the same order of things obtained, and the most sanguine hearts of a most sanguine and light-hearted people could see no opening in the surrounding circumstances that would lead them to believe that better days were close at hand. To a traveller passing through the rural districts of Ireland the evidences of this exodus are present everywhere. Here and there amongst the low hills and green valleys stand in staring vacuity the old homes of the departed emigrants. You visit one of the many of these places, and everything about it is

ruin and decay. There is nothing to indicate that within these old walls scenes of human joy, sorrow, or suffering had ever been enacted. The clay floor is a mass of rubbish, composed of the thatched roof that offered shelter in better days. The hinges on the door are rusted away, and the openings of the windows seem vacuous as the eyeless sockets of an old skull. On the spot where the turf fire blazed and cracked nettles and weeds grow up in luxuriance. Around the door, where perhaps some of Blanshard's old settlers played in infancy, the grass grows green. The spring near the old cabin flows on bright as it did before, and with the same song, but no one is there now to taste of its waters. The little farm of an acre or two has passed into other hands, and the last inhabitant of the old house has been so long gone that, excepting for the rude stone in the little churchyard that marks the last resting-place of some one still dear to the emigrant, his very name would be forgotten. To a traveller of a reflective mind a visit to these old places has a most impressive effect. There must have been some extraordinary circumstances to produce such extraordinary results. The ties that bind most people to the spot of their nativity are not easily broken, and the conditions that led to so many ruined and empty homes in that unfortunate country must have been unbearable indeed.

#### BORN IN "OULD OIRELAND."

On the banks of the river Shannon, in the southeastern part of Ireland, stands the old historic city of Limerick, near which, in the village of Adare, was born, on the 1st day of September, 1813 (or nearly eighty-six years ago), Mr. Reuben Switzer, the subject

of our present sketch. Like nearly all of the old settlers of Blanshard, he was the son of a small farmer who tilled a few acres for the support of his wife and family. He was the eldest of thirteen children, seven of whom came to Canada and settled with their father in the new township of Blanshard, in the year 1843, the subject of our sketch not coming to this country till 1846, or three years later. Of the six sons who came to Canada, four are still living—William, on the 3rd concession ; Reuben, on the 2nd concession ; Henry, on the Mitchell Road ; Adam, on the 14th concession. Richard, who lived on the Mitchell Road, died many years ago, and Cornelius, who lived on the 2nd concession, is also dead. Every one of these men were energetic, enterprising, and thrifty, all having acquired good farms and an honorable name among the citizens of the township.

The subject of our sketch, being the eldest, was early inured to toil, assisting his father on the little farm, and thereby contributing something to the support of the younger members of the family. He, however, when his other duties would permit, attended a school in the neighborhood, until he reached his fourteenth year. This seminary of learning was conducted on the same lines as nearly all similar institutions in Ireland seventy years ago, with this exception, perhaps, that the teacher in this case was an extreme disciplinarian. His name was Armstrong, and Mr. Switzer has still a lively recollection of his efforts to maintain order at the seat of learning over which he presided. The building in which Mr. Armstrong trained the young idea how to shoot was in part of an old ruined castle. Apparently the genius of the ancient barons who, if they did

not do as they pleased among the armies of heaven, certainly did so among the inhabitants of the earth, had fallen on the shoulders of the pedagogue, who was untiring in asserting his prerogative among his scholars. In his theological researches he had taken to heart that piece of philosophy that "he that spareth the rod spoileth the child." In his dealings with the school he kept this constantly in mind, so much so that the position held at the court of James I. in his youth by Sir Mungo Malagrowether might be considered a sinecure. The methods adopted by the profession of the present day to maintain order among the attending youth would have merited the utmost contempt from this old champion of the taws. He did not believe in teaching by induction, by pronunciation, or oral communication, but had unbounded confidence in communicating his ideas by inoculation with a good stout stick. As a matter of course, the more assiduous he was to instil into the young people the great educational truths he conceived were for their best interests in this way, the more careless and disinclined they were to receive them. Under these circumstances not much progress was made. As we have already observed, he was most punctilious in his observance of the rules laid down in the school. To attain the highest point of excellence in this way, a board was hung up at the door, on the one side of which was printed the word "out" and on the reverse side the word "in." Mr. Armstrong, no doubt desirous of devoting as much time as possible to his scholars, had no recess between the hours of nine in the morning and four in the afternoon. As might be expected, many of the scholars would have occasion to retire during this long period of confinement. To

prevent any interference with the onerous duties of the master, when a boy desired a short recess he turned the board with the word "out" toward the teacher, and when he returned he reversed it, showing the word "in." On one occasion a young scion of the honorable house of Moriarty, one of the scholars, inadvertently entered the sacred hall without turning the board, and took his seat, the word "out" still glaring on the unturned sign. Mr. Armstrong, seeing this state of affairs, considered it an unpardonable breach of discipline, and proceeded to point out to the young gentleman who had sat down the gross infringement of the rules of which he had been guilty. "Misther Moriarty, come up here, sor," said Mr. Armstrong. The representative of the Moriarty family accordingly advanced to the front. "Do you see the board, sor?" Mr. Moriarty signified his assent that he saw the board. "Do you see the word 'out,' sor?" The young gentleman gave his assent, and mildly hinted that he had omitted to turn the board as he came in. Mr. Armstrong assumed a look of great dignity, and said, "Mr. Moriarty, so long as that board shows the word 'out' you're out, and not till it shows the word 'in' are you in. Be careful, sor, and not break the rules of the school."

#### STARTS FOR AMERICA.

Having bid farewell to Mr. Armstrong and school days, he stayed with his father on the farm and did what work he could get in the neighborhood, until he reached his 20th year. In 1833 he married Miss Sparling, the daughter of a neighboring farmer, and began life for himself, having in the meantime obtained the position of steward to a gentleman in the county Clare.

In this position he stayed nine months, when a similar place with more remuneration was offered to him in the county of Kerry, about six miles from Tralee. Here he stayed for three years, overseer on an embankment which was being constructed to keep out the sea. Having completed this work he again moved back to Limerick, to a place called Castletown Waller. Here Mrs. Switzer obtained the position of laundress to the Rev. Mr. Waller, while he worked on the estate, his wages being at the rate of one shilling per day, the highest wage he ever received in Ireland. He remained here for seven years, when the savings of himself and wife during that time amounted to what he considered a sufficient sum to warrant him undertaking the journey to Canada. Previous to this, however, his father and brothers had, in 1843, left Ireland for this country, and had reached the Mitchell Road, where they located the farm on which Henry Switzer now resides. In April, therefore, in 1846, he resolved to follow the rest of the family, and the 18th day of that month saw him, his wife, and five children on board a ship at Limerick, under Captain Hugol, for Quebec. After seven weeks tossing on the Atlantic they at last reached their destination. At Quebec he was detained seven days in quarantine, when, through the kindness of the captain, he obtained a pass to Brantford, which was most opportune, as his supply of cash was very small indeed. Having reached the town of Brantford, he obtained a lodging for his wife and family, when he left for Blanshard on foot, and made the distance, sixty miles, in one day.

We must notice in passing, however, a circumstance that occurred on the voyage, which, in those days of

long periods in making a trip across the Atlantic, sometimes happened, but which in these days of fast steamers rarely ever occur. This was the death of a passenger a woman, who was buried at sea. The scene on board the little vessel in mid-ocean, when the body was committed to the deep, was most impressive and one which Mr. Switzer can never forget. Those who have crossed the ocean know that in a very short time the passengers on board a vessel seem to each other as if they all belong to one family, and soon acquire a kindly interest in one another. Any occurrence affecting anyone is quickly noticed, and rouses the feelings to a greater degree than the same occurrence would do on land. On the morning preceding the burial, notices were posted here and there on the ship, setting forth that the body would be committed to the sea at a certain hour. It was a beautiful day, and a cloudless sky was mirrored in the great ocean that lay beneath it like a sheet of glass. On the deck the passengers moved around as if afraid to disturb the quiet repose that seemed everywhere. During the previous night a passenger had come on board unbidden, of pale, ashy aspect, and of cold and unrelenting hand. He had stricken and claimed the victim now to be buried in the still waters. At length the ship's bell began to toll slowly in the solemn tones of a funeral knell. At one of the hatchways on the upper deck two stout sailors were seen to emerge, followed by two more with heads uncovered and moving with that measured and solemn tread that seemed to keep time to the tolling of the death bell. They bore between them the dead body, which had been tied up in a piece of sail-cloth, with a great weight fastened to



the feet. The mournful cortege moved round the ship till it came to a part where a board had been laid to receive the remains. On this they were placed, when the captain took his place and read the beautiful service of the Church of England. As he reached the words "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? With the full hope of a glorious resurrection, we commit this body to the deep," one end of the board was raised, and all that was mortal of the poor emigrant shot down into the dark sea with a weird-like splash that seemed to strike every person on board with horror. All looked eagerly over the side of the ship, but nothing was to be seen but a slight ripple on the face of the deep water. Orders were now given to the men to man the yards, the boatswain piped for wind, which slowly arose, filling the sails, and the good ship bore away to the distant west, dashing the water from her prow with her load of human freight.

#### SETTLES IN BLANSHARD.

Having arrived in Blanshard, in 1846, his first efforts were directed to obtain work. This he found with Mr. Creighton on the base-line. With Mr. Creighton he stayed for one month, and received for his services twenty-eight bushels of wheat, which Mr. Cathcart took to St. Marys with the oxen and had made into flour. Preparatory to bringing his family into the township, he built a shanty on the Mitchell Road, where they resided the ensuing winter. Continuing to labor on the farm for a couple of years, he learned the best methods of clearing land, which was of great importance to a new settler in those days. In 1848 he located on lot 8, in the 3rd concession, which farm

he still owns. In this affair he was unfortunate from a financial point of view. The Canada Company's lands in Blanshard were being sold to actual settlers at \$3.00 per acre, and ten years to pay the principal, with interest at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum. Through some mistake the papers obtained from the Company's agent were informal, and at the end of the ten years, when Mr. Switzer applied for his deed, it was found that he really had no claim. In the meantime the lands in the township had become valuable from the improvements made by the early settlers, and the Company, availing themselves of these circumstances, raised the price of their lands to \$13, \$16, and \$20 per acre. Mr. Switzer was thus compelled to take his land at the latter price or lose all his improvements. For a person in his financial condition, this was a terrible blow. To have recourse to law proceedings with the Canada Company would have been madness, and he quietly assumed the responsibility, and by the most determined efforts succeeded in liquidating the debt in a few years. To enable him to surmount such great difficulties, he contracted for clearing land for some of the farmers whose circumstances permitted an expenditure of money for that important object. He in the short period of two years cleared for Mr. Shier, of Woodham, land to the extent of fifty acres. To those old settlers who understand the clearing of land this will appear as an extraordinary amount of labor to accomplish in such a short time.

The chopping and clearing of land, laborious as it is under any conditions, is to a novice almost a hopeless task. He was considered a good axeman fifty years ago, if he was able in the course of seven or eight

days to chop an acre of land. Much depended, too, on the falling of the timber for the ease with which it was afterwards disposed of. A bushman who understood the throwing of the large trees side by side, and perhaps laying another equally large across so them that it would balance and could easily be swung around and laid lengthwise with the other two, thus forming what was called a roll pile, had a great advantage when the timber was logged and burnt. This chopping was done in the winter, and forty years ago in all directions through the leafless woods, was heard the crash of falling trees and the hollow boom as some great old monarch with far extended arms struck the ground. In the evening, when the shades of night began to settle down on the dark forest, and from the other side of the little clearing the backwoodsman could see the twinkle of the tallow candle from the only window in his shanty, within whose humble walls waited and watched his wife and her little ones, with what determined and renewed energy he buried the axe at every stroke, until the great tree cracked and tore and fell thundering to the earth, when the voices from the vast forest echoed back in reverberating tones the sound of its fall. This was called the evening gun. In the spring, usually about the end of May or the first of June, the brush was burnt from the fallow, and if a good burn had been made the scene was about as uninviting a one as it was possible to see.

#### OLD-TIME LOGGING BEES.

The brush having burned, the next stage in clearing land was the logging. A gang of loggers was usually composed of four rollers, a yoke of oxen, and a

teamster. The duties of the loggers was to pile up the logs into great heaps preparatory to burning them. An acre was supposed to be a good day's work. Sometimes it was decided to make a "logging bee," when the fallow would be staked out in lots of one acre to each gang of men. The logging bees were considered great occasions in those olden days. In the early morning in summer men gathered from all directions through the woods, each one with a handspike, the only implement he would use during the day. The handspikes were usually made of maple—that timber being exceedingly stiff—slightly flattened on the top near the point, and rounded at the other end for the hands of the logger. All the men and the oxen were arranged at one end of the field, and stood chatting, laughing, and telling stories till they commenced the labors of the day. The attire of the loggers was simplicity itself. A straw hat, a shirt, usually home-made, and a pair of light pantaloons completed the outfit. The shirt was always open at the bosom, and the sleeves rolled up to the armpits, a belt around the waist (no braces); a handspike in his hands, and the man was ready for business. The grog boss was always present, dispensing the contents of his jug with frequency and liberality. A couple of choppers were also appointed, whose duties were to be on the field and cut any logs that might have been omitted in the winter. At last the word is given, and every man takes his post determined to complete his allotment before anyone else has finished his. The scene where all was comparative quietness becomes at once animated and exciting. The movements and the shouting of the men, the voice of the teamster calling to the oxen, here and there

clouds of ashes arising as the logs are drawn over them. In a few minutes the men are as black as the smut of the burnt timber can make them. The grog boss is hurrying here and there over the field, with a pail of water in one hand and a jug of whiskey in the other, supplying the wants of the thirsty men. Each one helps himself to a cup of the one and a "corker" of the other, and with the perspiration streaming from every pore, enters with invigorated force into the race. So the work goes on until each one has finished his "through," when all wend their way to the shanty to fortify the inner man with the goods spread in endless profusion on the tables.

The timber being at last all burnt, the field was fenced and the next season sown in wheat. No cultivation was required, and indeed none could be given, the land being one solid mass of roots and stumps. The grain being sown, the settler took his harrow—an implement made with the axe from the fork of a tree, in the shape of the letter "A," in which nine teeth, each about one and a half inches square, were driven, four on each side, and one at the point—and with that very imperfect article the whole of the settler's crop was harrowed in. The man was full of hope, indeed, who could walk all day at the heads of a pair of oxen, with one of the harrows we have described trailing at the end of the chain fastened to the yoke laid on the neck of the poor cattle. But such was the only way that the work could be done. The reward in many instances—nay, in every instance where ordinary care and foresight was taken—has been sure. A vast number of these old gentlemen who drive into the country towns in Canada with costly carriages and trappings, began their

career exactly as I have described, and are now passing their declining years in comfort and ease; and all this has been accomplished by thousands of men still hale and hearty. No further evidence is necessary to show that Canada, as a field for the sober, industrious, and energetic man, has rewards to give which can be found in no other country in the world. The high moral tone of her people, the vigorous administration of the law, affording the fullest protection to life and property, the liberality of her institutions, the fertility of her soil, offer everything to the emigrant in quest of a home.

## AS LICENSE INSPECTOR

Mr. Switzer, therefore, as time passed away, became possessed of a fair portion of this world's goods. As a public-spirited citizen, too, he has taken an active part in public life. When the township of Blanshard was first organized, he offered himself as a candidate for the office of councillor, and was elected on two occasions as a member of that body. On his retirement from the municipal board he was appointed License Inspector for the municipality. We of course do not know what the duties were exactly, but the emolument certainly was not such as to lead a man quickly to wealth and independence, being only \$10.00 per annum. He had, in making his various peregrinations over the municipality, performing the duties of his office, every opportunity of ascertaining the quality of the various viands disposed of at the different hosteleries in the township. Blanshard, at the period of which we write, must have been a place where all the thirsty settlers in Canada had located, as it contained no less than thirteen hotels. If the time that it takes

some of Her Majesty's subjects to pass one hotel be any indication of the time necessary for the inspector to perform his important duties, his office could not have been a sinecure. Still the office had its advantages altogether outside of the salary and social standing it was supposed to confer on the recipient of the distinguished position. It was his privilege to inspect the various liquors at any time, as well as to sample every bottle in the bar, to enable him to decide whether they were up to the required standard or not. It will thus be seen that a person holding the honorable position of inspector had a difficult task to perform among the thirteen houses of public entertainment, and preserve the dignity of his office.

In 1862 he met a great misfortune in the loss of his wife. They had lived happily together, and had seen their children grow up around them respected and respectable. The family consisted of James, in New Zealand; John, in Manitoba; Henry, on the old homestead; Eliza (Mrs. Harding), at Fordwich; Rachael (Mrs. Connelly), at Trowbridge; Mary Ann (Mrs. Whaley), died in Manitoba; Charlotte (Mrs. Davis), died in Logan; and Agnes, also dead.

#### SOCIAL AND MUNICIPAL.

Mr. Switzer took an active part in the organization of the Blanshard Agricultural Society, and ever since its inception has been one of its most active supporters. During the whole period the society has been in existence he has been an officer; for a number of years president, always a director, until three or four years ago he resigned, when the society, as a mark of approval for his distinguished services, elected him an honorary director. In that position he is the first and



only one on which the distinction was ever conferred.

Early in the sixties a change was made by Government in the law regarding the militia in the rural districts. Blanshard was divided into two sections, the square township forming one, and the gore part another. The late T. B. Guest was major, and appointed Mr. Switzer as captain of the first district, embracing the square township. The first time the writer ever met the subject of this sketch was in the winter shortly after his appointment to that office. On a cold morning in the month of February, we saw a strange gentleman driving toward our shanty in the piece of clearing we made, with rather a good-looking horse and cutter. On meeting this person he introduced himself as Reuben Switzer, of Blanshard, that he had been appointed captain in the sedentary force, and was desirous that I should accept the office of lieutenant, for which position I had been recommended to him by Mr. James Dinsmore. Mr. Switzer at this time was rather above the average size, straight, well made, and active looking. His features were regular and his hair, which was long and heavy, was as white as the snow, which gave him altogether a striking appearance. It is pleasing here also to state that the friendship which sprang up on that occasion has continued, without a single cloud having passed over it, since, a period of nearly thirty years. In 1876 he took an active part in the organization of the Blanshard Mutual Fire Insurance Company. He has for some years been president of this institution, and has sat as a member of the Board of Directors ever since its inception. Mr. Switzer has been for nearly seventy years a member of the Orange Order, making him almost the oldest, if not the very oldest, member of the society in Canada.



He is to-day, at the age of eighty-six years, most enthusiastic in his attachment to its teachings. He first became a member of the Order in 1830, when he was 17 years old, and on his arrival in Canada in 1846, he organized the Lodge on the Mitchell Road, No. 384, the first Orange Lodge in the township. For over fifty years he has never failed on a single occasion to testify publicly his unswerving loyalty to the Order by joining in the procession of the brethren on the 12th. After organizing No. 384, he was elected its first Master, and retained that position for nine years. Since he first came to Canada he has occupied a prominent position in the institution, and has attended a greater number of Provincial Lodges than perhaps any other member of the Order in this section of the country. He filled the office of the District Master for two years, County Master for several years, was delegate to Provincial Lodges held in almost every section of the province, and in 1896 was appointed delegate to the Supreme Grand Lodge at Collingwood, in 1897 at Windsor, in 1898 at Ottawa, in 1899 at Barrie. At these various gatherings of the highest Court of the Order in Canada he is frequently honored with a seat on the platform next to the Supreme Grand Master, as a recognition of his distinguished services in connection with the institution. As might be expected, Mr. Switzer has been a lifelong supporter of the Conservative party and a most enthusiastic believer in all the actions of the late Sir John Macdonald. He has held the appointment of treasurer of the County Conservative Association since it was organized, and has also been treasurer of the Conservative Association of the township since its inception. He rarely, however, talks politics, and is never offensive to opponents in the discussion of

party questions. His great good nature manifests itself here, as it does in his every-day life, and his Reform friends in the township are numerous and influential. In religion he adheres to the Methodist church, although I believe he is not a member of any religious body. As a farmer he was fairly well up in his calling, and has the honor of fattening the first animal that ever left the township for the English market, and which was sold to the firm of Robson & Sparling many years ago. In 1865 he married Mrs. Isabella Harding, widow of the late Mr. Harding, who resided on lot 8, on the 2nd concession. This lady had four sons at the time of her marriage to Mr. Switzer—Rev. Philip Harding, of Ohio; Thomas Harding, on the old homestead; Samuel, of Port Rowan, editor of the *News-Record*; and Richard, in British Columbia. Mrs. Switzer died several years ago, and the old gentleman is again left alone. He is an honest man, and has discharged his duties as a citizen of Canada in such a way as should be an example to younger men. The kind old man is bending low under the weight of his eighty-six years, yet his heart seems buoyant as ever. His manner is as jovial and free as it was when we first met him thirty years ago. His long white hair is still abundant, his step is as firm as it was in his youth, but he has many evidences, distinctly marked, indicating that he has passed the four score. We trust, however, that time will deal gently with him in the future as it has done in the past, and that he may yet, for many years to come, meet his numerous friends in those haunts in which he delights to meet them, and where the cares of life can be for a time hidden away beneath the mantle of good fellowship.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## DAVID BRETHOUR.

DURING the latter part of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, the French Monarchy, under Louis XIV., had reached the height of its power. The wholesome restraint that Cromwell had acquired and maintained on the Continent of Europe had passed away. A new order of things had been established in Britain at the Restoration, which had destroyed her prestige and her power. From the front rank of the nations to which she had been raised by the masterly policy of Oliver, she had sunk to the lowest depths of infamy and imbecility. Wise and patriotic men stood aloof from the truculent and immoral debauchees that swarmed around the court of Charles II. The iron hand of perhaps the greatest ruler that Britain has ever seen was no longer felt, and the poor remains that had been dug from their last resting place to satisfy the cowardly king were no longer feared. The Edict of Nantes had been revoked, and the followers of the doctrines of the Reformation were subjected to such persecution as threatened them with extermination. Notwithstanding all the efforts of the Prince of Orange after he had ascended the British throne, he was quite unable to overthrow the



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power of the Grand Monarch. With the united power of the States-General and Great Britain in the field, he only restrained to some extent the power of Louis, and his greatest victories on the continent were barren of results. In the reign of Anne, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the power of Great Britain asserted itself once more, and under John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, she attained to a greater glory than she had ever before reached. For a number of years the persecution in the Palatine, a province on the Rhine, had been unbearable, and many of those who professed the reformed doctrines had been subjected to the most cruel treatment, and had sealed their affection for the Protestant faith with their lives. An application was at last made to the British General for protection, with whom it was arranged that those who chose to go should be sent across the Atlantic to seek freedom for themselves and their families in the forests of America. Accordingly three ships were freighted with the poor persecuted people of the Palatine and sailed for the west. After putting out to sea they were overtaken by a great storm, and one of the ships was cast away on the southwest coast of Ireland, where all those who were aboard finally settled. On board of this vessel were the ancestors of some of the pioneers of Blanchard, particularly the Brethours, Switzers, Shiers, and others. The ancestor of our present sketch was among the ship-wrecked on that occasion.

#### COMING TO CANADA.

David Brethour was born in the village of Ballantrane, in the county of Limerick, Ireland, in 1831. He was the youngest of a family of ten children, six sons

and four daughters. He was unfortunate in the loss of his mother when he was nine months old, she having fallen a victim to that terrible scourge, Asiatic cholera. His father had a small farm in Limerick, on which he labored to support his family and pay the yearly rent to his landlord. In 1833, having but the little piece of land, he decided to come to America, sailing from the town of Cork for Quebec, making the long, dreary passage with his children in eleven weeks. After arriving at Quebec his father came on west till he reached the county of Ontario, and settled in the township of Georgina, on the eastern shore of Lake Simcoe. That township was then, and was for many years afterwards, a complete wilderness. This part of Ontario was far away from the great water-ways that skirted the southern part of the Province, and was consequently far removed from the markets where produce could be disposed of. Mr. Brethour being only about three years old, the first thing he remembers was the little episode of his father shooting a great bear in a small patch of oats that grew around the shanty. Being fully alive to the dangers attending bear-hunting in that wild country, he wisely took precaution to secure his safety if the result should turn out otherwise than well. He therefore, by the aid of a ladder, securely placed himself in a hemlock tree and awaited with his gun the arrival of bruin. He had not long to wait when his bearship came out of the woods for his evening meal of the new settler's oats. Taking a good aim, he fired and shot the animal dead. He was desirous, however, to make sure before he descended from his perch in the tree, and one of his sons came out with another gun and fired a couple of shots into the

dead body lying among the oats, after which he safely descended from his seat.

In the young period of Mr. Brethour's life he escaped that terrible ordeal through which the youth of all civilized countries have to pass, the public school. In the township of Georgina there were no such institutions for the training of the young mind. He had accordingly passed the period of life when boys are supposed to learn and ought to be taught the various branches of education which fit them for the duties of after life. As he grew to manhood he felt most severely the want of some education, or at least that he should be able to read. He therefore, during the hours of recess from labor, made such progress in his studies as at least placed him on a par with the settlers who surrounded him. Since that time he has been a most varied and extensive reader in every branch of literature, and is, perhaps, the best historian in the township of Blanshard.

#### THOSE EARLY DAYS.

Fifty or sixty years ago the life of a young person in the backwoods of Canada was uneventful and monotonous. In those times there was no debating club at the corner school-house, where the youthful orators of the bush could air their eloquence or exhibit their powers of declamation to the admiring elders in the district. There was no concert or literary society, no tea-meeting where the young people, dressed in their most splendid habiliments, could come to see or be seen of each other. There were no churches, or very few, where the pious settlers could gather together and listen to the word from some veteran old minister who



had travelled far through the trackless forest to break among the few waiting ones the bread of life. All such meetings, when they did take place, were held in the shanties of the settlers. The life of a young person, therefore, in those days consisted of a continuous round of labor, eating, and sleeping. Mr. Brethour, occupied his time in assisting his father to clear up the farm until he reached his fifteenth year. From this time until he was twenty-one he worked with the neighboring settlers, and considered himself amply rewarded with the sum of \$8.00 per month. In 1851 he married Elizabeth Shier, of the adjoining township of Brock, a sister of Mr. Shier, of Woodham. The issue of this union was seven children—Rebecca, (Mrs. Heron) of Manitoba; Catharine Ann, (Mrs. Miners) of Manitoba; Wesley, Reeve of Hamiota County, Manitoba; Augustus, in Blanshard; Mary Jane, in Blanshard; Harriet, in Blanshard; and Michael, in Blanshard, the last three on the old homestead. After his marriage he rented a farm till 1853, when he came west into the township of Blanshard, and settled on lot 4, on the 7th concession, which was then all woods, and on which he has remained ever since.

#### IN PUBLIC LIFE.

Like nearly all the old settlers of Blanshard, he was a member of the Orange Order, having joined this institution in 1852. His first duty after reaching the township was, of course, to construct a shanty for himself and make a small clearing on which to plant or grow food for the family. This he had no sooner accomplished than he undertook to build an Orange hall on the corner of his piece of clearing, early

in 1854. From that time forward he has taken a most prominent part in all the affairs of the Order, but of this we will have occasion to speak later on. After the township was organized under the existing Municipal Act, the council of Blanshard appointed him as the first License Inspector in the municipality. The hotels in the township were quite numerous at this period of its history. A constant supply of liquor, however, was easily obtained from a distillery that was operated by Mr. Shoebottom, at Silver Creek, on the Mitchell Road, in the old log building which still stands near a spring that flows from the bank adjoining. The whiskey made in this, the great central emporium, we have heard spoken of in most eulogistic terms. Considering the quality, it was exceedingly cheap, being easily obtainable at thirty-five cents per gallon. There was no doubt as to the purity of its constituents, or as to its potency. It had this wonderful peculiarity, however, which placed it far in advance of all modern distillations, and which was told us the other day by a gentleman who has had an intimate acquaintance with the products of both periods, "that it had not the harsh, burning taste of the decoctions of the present time, but was nice and sweet, and 'sorter' soothing to the taste, and a whole barrel of it did not contain a single headache."

During these years, from 1853 till 1859, Mr. Brethour had become quite popular in the division of the township in which he resided. At the election of 1859 he was brought forward by a section of the people in Polling Division No. 2, to oppose Mr. Cathcart, who had been sitting at the board almost continuously since 1852. The contest arose chiefly out of the policy pur-

sued by Mr. Cathcart in the building of the base-line gravel road. The contest was a keen one and the vote polled at an early hour, when he was defeated by Mr. Cathcart by one vote. This vote was cast by Mr. William Fotheringham, of the 8th concession, now of the township of Tuckersmith, Huron County.

Mr. Brethour took an active part in promoting the base-line gravel road scheme, and on the formation of the company was elected one of the directors, and sat on the Board for four years. This road was used for a number of years throughout the municipality as an election cry against candidates residing on it, and cost more than one aspiring young politician a seat at the council. It remained, however, for Mr. Brethour to remove all difficulty in connection with it a few years later. In 1872 he contested the municipality for the reeveship, his opponent being the present chairman of the Road and Bridge Committee of St. Marys, Mr. Lawrie, whom he succeeded in defeating. In 1873 he was again elected reeve. In the meantime the gravel road company had gotten into difficulties, when the sheriff seized and sold the road, Mr. Little, of Prospect Hill, being the purchaser. Under the proprietorship of Mr. Little the road was allowed to get sadly out of repair, and complaints were loud and numerous regarding its condition. The action of Mr. Cathcart a few years previous, in taking over the London and Proof Line gravel road, had given the best satisfaction to the ratepayers generally. When it became known, in 1873, that the reeve and the then clerk of the township had opened negotiations with Mr. Little for the purchase of the road, the people were anxious that an amicable arrangement should be reached, and the road assumed

by the township. A settlement was soon effected. The road was bought for the sum of \$1,100, the toll-gate removed at once, which, with the exception of the little episode between the town and the township, was the last toll-gate ever seen in the township of Blanshard. Mr. Brethour retired from the reeveship and has not since been a candidate for municipal honors. Prior to his acting as reeve he was appointed, in 1867, as collector of taxes, which office he held for four years.

In the year 1866 events occurred along the frontier of Canada that stirred the people of this country to the core. The civil war in the United States had been closed by the South returning to their allegiance, and the Stars and Stripes again floated over every part of that country. The whole army was disbanded and thousands of the very scum of society that had served in the ranks were without employment.

To enable themselves still to live in idleness, and impose upon the unwary and the ignorant, a society was organized in New York, known as the Fenian Brotherhood. This institution was the head-quarters for the vile, the idle, and the hearts wherein lurked the dark demon of revenge for what they thought was the unjust measure of British rule in Ireland. O'Mahoney was created head centre and gathered in the shekels, in return for which he issued through a portion of the press the mad ravings of an unprincipled vagabond, as unction to the souls of his dupes throughout the United States. A band of those ragged rascals had gathered together at Buffalo for the purpose of beginning the liberation of Ireland by spilling the innocent blood of loyal Canadians. In a quiet and still hour on the night of the 6th of June, about 500 of these mis-

guided men crossed over into Canada with the avowed intention of making war on the Canadians, in order to liberate a people 3,000 miles away. This little army, which was commanded by one of the name of O'Neil, soon found itself in difficulties, and the gallant champion of the rights of Ireland had recourse to such tactics as we heard related of a certain captain in the civil war. This champion of liberty, having been ordered into action, addressed his soldiers before engaging the enemy somewhat as follows: "Soldiers of the Grand Army of the United States, you are now about to show your powers in the field. The eyes of the world are turned to you; be brave, be valiant, acquit yourselves like heroes, as did those warriors who followed the immortal Washington to glory and to victory. Soldiers, if you are forced to retire, retire like men, and seeing that I am a little lame, I'll start now." Such was the conduct of the mighty O'Neil. He had no sooner touched Canadian soil than he prepared to return as quickly as possible. The men of Blanshard, like the loyal men in every part of the Province, were up in arms. A meeting was called at McIntyre's Corners to organize a company of volunteers. There was an immense gathering from all parts of the township. Enthusiastic speeches were made, and the military ardor of the people was roused to the highest pitch. A company was soon formed, and in choosing their officers, Mr. Brethour was chosen the first captain of the first volunteer company ever formed in the township. A ludicrous incident occurred on this occasion. After the company had been formed they had to be sworn in. A worthy member of the quorum lived a short distance from the Corners, and was at once sent

for to perform that important duty. On his arrival on the scene he made every effort to discharge the function for which he had been called, but without avail, and he had to give up the matter in disgust. He was entirely guiltless of the ability to administer the oath to the men. In this dilemma Mr. Brethour went to St. Marys, was sworn in himself, and when he returned, administered the oath to the company. He held the office of captain for five years, when he retired, retaining his rank, and a young man who was lieutenant took the captaincy. This man was H. A. L. White, who, at present commands the 28th Perth Battalion.

As we have stated elsewhere, he became a member of the Orange order in 1852, and still continues an active worker in that institution. In 1875 he was instrumental in building the the neat brick hall at Woodham, for the accommodation of the members of the Society in that neighborhood. He acted as Master in this lodge for many years, and with such success that it has now a membership of seventy or eighty of the most respectable citizens of that section of Blanshard, and is considered the banner lodge of the west. He is untiring in his efforts to place the Order on the very highest plane, both as to sobriety and respectability. In this he so well succeeded that the Woodham boys have carried off the prize for the neatest outfit and most gentlemanly conduct at the various gatherings at the annual parade on the anniversary of the Boyne. He organized No. 492, and acted as District Master for ten years, and on his retirement was presented by the brethren with a watch in recognition of his services. He was also elected County Master, which position he held for two years. The Woodham Lodge also enjoys

the distinction of having as one of its members the oldest Orangeman in Canada. Mr. Alexander Jameson, sr., was born in Ireland in the year 1810, and attended his first celebration of the 12th at the age of eighteen years. Since that period he has met the brethren on the morning of the anniversary of the Boyne without a single exception for seventy-two years. We venture to say that the whole history of Orangeism in Canada does not present a parallel case. Mr. Jameson is one of the old pioneers, and with Mr. Reuben Switzer, we believe, Blanshard can claim the distinction of having within her borders the two oldest members of the Orange order in Canada. The old gentleman is looking forward to the next 12th with as much ardor apparently as he would have done sixty years ago.

Mr. Brethour was early trained in the principles of the Conservative party, to which he has strictly adhered during his life, with the exception of perhaps one occasion, when he, along with many others of that party in Blanshard, and, indeed, throughout the province, withheld their support from a measure, which they considered not for the best interests of their adopted country. At the time of the Mackenzie Rebellion, in 1837, his father with all his brothers were strongly in favor of the Government party. For the few settlers who were located at that exciting period in the township of Georgina, his shanty was the rendezvous of the Royalists. They met there and discussed their plans. The elder Mr. Brethour taught them to drill, how to load their pieces, and the various evolutions peculiar to a corps of armed men. Like most of the small farmers in Ireland, and who had emigrated



to Canada, he had been a yeoman in that country, and was thoroughly acquainted with military tactics as taught at that period. The harsh and cruel opinions engendered in the minds of the Royalist party at that time against those known as the "Rebels," have, in the heart of the subject of our sketch, passed away. The principles for which Mackenzie fought have long since triumphed in this country, and no one will say but that they have been a boon to the people. Not for what he did, but for the principles he attempted to introduce in the parliament of Canada, Mr. Mackenzie's memory should still remain green in the hearts of Canadians.

Mr. Brethour is extremely good natured and kind in his intercourse with his friends and acquaintances. In all business transactions he is strictly honorable. He is widely read in all branches of literature, particularly history, in which department he is well posted. He is a member of the Church of England ; in her communion he has lived all his life, and takes considerable interest in church work. Although a strong advocate of the principles of temperance, he is not now a total abstainer, and we believe never was ; but his unflinching advocacy of those ideas put forth by temperance men cost him on one occasion his seat at the council board. Mr. Brethour is still strong, and from present appearances it seems that he will yet for many years to come enjoy life among the classic shades of Fish Creek.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## MATHEW FORSYTH.

THE most beautiful and romantic spots to be found anywhere in the township of Blanshard are found in the valley of the river Thames. From the bed of the stream, on either side, here and there in its tortuous course, rise precipitous banks to which cling, as of old, some of the ancient forest trees, throwing deep, dark shadows over the rippling water. From the highest elevations which mark its path a beautiful view can be obtained of the pretty town of St. Marys, nestling among what appears at a distance to be a dense mass of foliage. At other points the landscape gradually recedes back from the river until it reaches the height where stretches away in all directions the great plain of which the township is composed. In some places the land is cultivated to the very bed of the stream, and with the numerous farm houses dotted here and there in the valley, presents in the summer a pleasing and beautiful picture. To one of the most picturesque sections on the Thames came, in the fifties, Mr. Forsyth, the subject of this sketch.

Mathew Forsyth, as the name would denote, is a son of the heather, and was born at Greenlaw, in Berwickshire, on January 9th, 1822. His father, who was



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a farmer in that part of Scotland, was a typical Scot in so far as the training of his family was concerned. His circumstances were not such as to enable him to give his children an education above what could be obtained in the schools of the place where he resided. Such as their schools could afford he was determined they should obtain. Mr. Forsyth accordingly attended the parish school in Berwick until his sixteenth year. He also had a full share of attention given to his religious training. The great principles laid down in the Confession of Faith and the Shorter Catechism were duly expounded to him in the family circle. His mind, therefore, was early imbued with a reverence for sacred things, and an abiding love for the dogmas peculiar to that faith in which he lived, and for which many of his countrymen have struggled and fought to the death to maintain. He is preeminently a Scotchman in his manner, in his appearance, in his trend of thought, and in his conduct. His industry and thrift have brought him a competence for his old age. His skill and taste in the management of his farm has placed him in the front ranks of Blanshard's ablest men. We think it is Goldsmith that has said that "one business will generally be found enough for one man to follow," and we believe the intelligent prosecution of any calling will always bring its reward to the efforts of youth, and a pleasure in the quiet evening hours of old age.

Having completed his education at the parish school, he was indentured as an apprentice to a carpenter for three years for the purpose of acquiring a trade. On his part he carried out his agreement to the letter, and worked the three years without remuneration of any kind, which was the custom in Scotland with young

apprentices. His father in the meantime having died, he was deprived of his best counsellor and friend. He therefore returned to the farm to assist in its labors and maintain a home for his mother and the family. He resided at home till he reached his twenty-eighth year, when he resolved to push his fortune in Canada.

Leaving home in the spring of 1850, he sailed for New York, and at once came on till he reached Cobourg in Upper Canada. Here he began farming for himself, renting 200 acres. On this farm he laid the foundations of his future success. A combination of circumstances were in his favor. Shortly after coming into possession of his new venture the Russian war broke out in Europe, in which were involved several of the great powers. The great Western States of America and other sections of the continent had not yet been opened up for settlement. Railroads had not been built to carry produce to the seaboard, and provisions rose to great prices. Such a boom had never been seen in Canada, and extraordinary values were realized for the various articles produced on the farm. Wheat was sold for two dollars and twenty-five cents per bushel, and other goods, products of the soil, sold for proportionately high prices. During three years of prosperity many men made fortunes, and many who speculated recklessly were ruined. Amongst the former we find Mr. Forsyth. With the canny, careful management peculiar, it is said, to his countrymen, he was not carried away by the whirl of excitement that pervaded all classes at that period; and at the expiration of his lease he was able to move to the township of Blanshard and purchase one of the best locations in the beautiful valley of the Thames.

In December, 1854, he married Miss Margaret Mason, the daughter of a neighboring farmer. She was a kind and worthy helpmate, and did her duty nobly and well in the care of her household and training of their children. To them were born six of a family—Agnes, (Mrs. Crosbie) of Blanshard; Mary, (Mrs Thomson) of Manitoba; William, in Blanshard; James, on the old homestead; Isabella, (Mrs. Riddell) in Blanshard; and George Edmond, at home. Mr. Forsyth is happy, having his family grown up around him, industrious and thrifty, respectable citizens of our great Dominion.

In a municipality such as the one of which we are writing, blessed with good water and a fruitful soil, it is but natural to suppose that within her borders would be found able men who stand at the very head of the agricultural class. Many of these men are broad and liberal in their views regarding the management of their estates, and spare neither time nor money in carrying out the most advanced ideas in the prosecution of their calling. When this is the case it will generally be found to be followed by the best rewards. The farmer who is miserly in his dealings will be, as a rule, miserly in the treatment of his farm. The farm in almost every case becomes like its owner, and will give back its returns in a stunted and half-hearted way. Kind treatment is the great sesame which will unlock the hearts and the stores of the universe, and will find an everflowing response in the inanimate acres manipulated by the tiller of the soil. Indeed the farm may always be relied upon to respond to the kind attention of its owner. Gratitude in men is an unknown quantity, and, it is said, is a feeling engendered in the heart for favors yet to be received, and not for those which may

already have been given. Gratitude in the old farm is not an unknown quantity. To the care and attention of its owner it will always respond. As sure as the spring will come, and the fields in the old place have adorned themselves with the garments of summer, so sure will the old farm repay, with full barns, the care and kind treatment which has been extended to her in times that have gone by. Unfortunately, with many a short-sighted agriculturist, this great truth is disregarded. He draws on the bank until the funds are exhausted, leaves the business and his independent mode of life, and too often lowers his position by becoming a hireling of hirelings in the neighboring town.

In the course of our daily lives we meet many men who appear to spend a great portion of their time condemning the business of farming as unprofitable and unfitted for such exalted intellects as they feel heaven has bestowed on them. Such men have always been unfortunate in having very poor land that, in spite of their best efforts, would produce nothing. Sometimes, too, dark hints are thrown out that some ancestor, an old pioneer, did not know anything or he would not have settled in such a wretched spot. If we enquire into the character of such men we will generally find they are of that numerous class that expect to reap where they have not sowed, and gather where they have not planted. The dear old farm is always truthful. She is always responsive to the affection of her master, and will often give lavish returns in spite of the most harsh and cruel treatment. The subject of our sketch is one of those men who understand their business well. He does not belong to the class that expect to reap where they have not sowed, nor gather where they have not

planted. He does not complain about the toil and the hard lot of the tiller of the soil. He does not find his returns altogether inadequate to recompense him for his ingenuity and labor. He does not complain about the old place being "played out." He is the very opposite of all that. Knowing his business well, and doing it, he has made farming a success. The old place under his treatment is more productive, and his affection for this little corner of mother earth is reciprocated by full barns and ample stores of her choicest gifts. We know of no farm kept in better condition than Mr. Forsyth's. Everything is clean. Weeds are not allowed to exhaust the soil of its fertile qualities. The fences are well kept and the barns will repay a visit from anyone who has any concern at all about the farming interests. There is a place for everything on the farm, and everything will be found in its place. In the byres, in the stables, in the pens, the various animals seem happy, sleek, and fat. Cleanliness is the order of the day in every department, and so everything is healthy and thrifty looking. Mr. Forsyth may be said to be the first pioneer who gave his attention to the improvement of stock in the township of Blanshard. Mr. William Laing, of Downie, and Mr. Hugh Thompson, of Nissouri, had already good herds. With characteristic forethought and enterprise he embarked in the same line in the township of Blanshard. The course he had marked out for himself then he has adhered to ever since. He appears always to act on the principle that whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well. The operations of Mr. Laing, Mr. Thompson, and himself have been of great advantage to the several sections where they resided in the



improvement of their stock. It is true that many others of the farmers in this municipality have carried on the work so well begun. Mr. John Hooper, Mr. David Creighton, Mr. McCullough, have all in later years contributed much to the progress, and enhanced the profits on the farm by their enterprise and skill in this direction.

Mr. Forsyth also took an active part in establishing the agricultural show in South Perth. Of this institution, in the early days, he was president, and for many years a director. Though possessed of the qualities that lead to success as a public man, he has steadily refused to take a prominent position in the management of public affairs. He has been more than once solicited to take office in the township, but always declined. He preferred to give his support in those matters to men whom he thought better qualified to act in that capacity than himself. As might be expected from his early training, he took an active part in the management of the affairs of the church to which he belonged. He contributed to the erection of the old Presbyterian Church that stood east of the Mitchell road, in the 10th concession of Blanshard, and of which he was a trustee. After the division of that congregation between Granton and Nissouri stations, he became a member of the Nissouri congregation. In this church he is also a trustee. With the strong predilections of many of his countrymen, he has an abiding faith in the doctrine of Presbyterianism, and is a consistent worker in the Reform party. From the nature of his disposition he does not put himself forward prominently in either, but his convictions are as fixed and immovable as the hills of his native country. In 1885 he met the greatest misfortune of his life, in the loss of her who

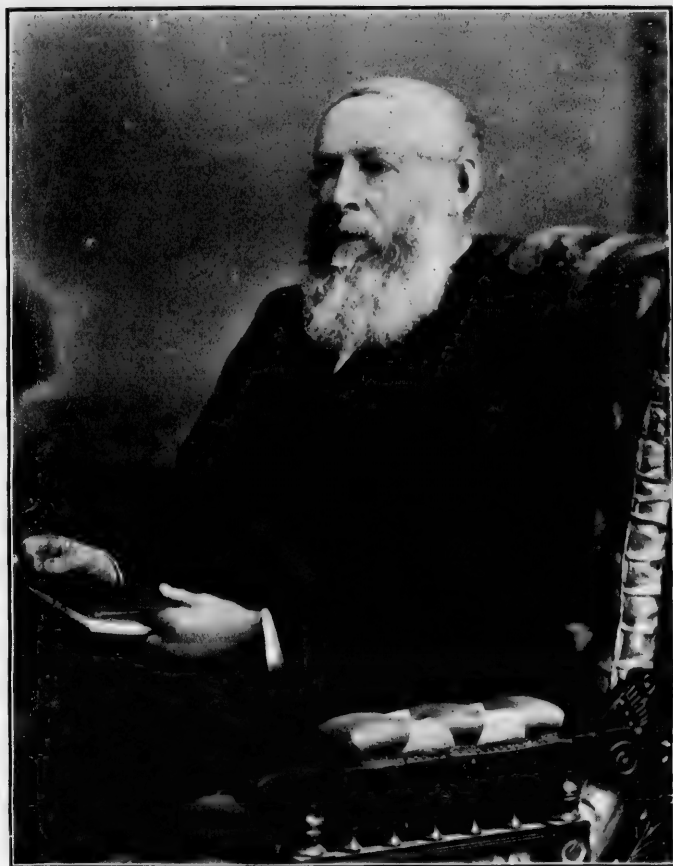
had been his companion for over thirty years. Mr. Forsyth is a person of most kindly disposition. He is most honorable in his dealing with his fellowmen, and one of whom it may be said, his word is as good as his bond. In closing this brief sketch we desire to say that if any of our readers in the course of their peregrinations chance to wander into the beautiful valley of the Thames, in its course through Blanshard, they will find a kindly welcome and abundance of good entertainment under the hospitable roof of the "Auld Laird" of Greenside.

## CHAPTER XV.

## JOHNSTON ARMSTRONG.

THE subject of this sketch, though the last to be dealt with, is by no means the least prominent of the old pioneers of Blanshard. He, unlike several whom we have already had occasion to mention in this work, took but little part in those political questions which seem to affect and arouse the ambitions of so many men. His mind appears to have been strongly permeated with the principles of a living Christianity from a very early period of his life. Placing politics, therefore, in a subordinate position, he devoted his thoughts, his energy, and his influence to the introduction and the spread of that spiritual life the tendencies of which are for the good of mankind. Mr. Armstrong was of a sanguine temperament, and untiring in his efforts to accomplish what he believed to be in the line of duty. When the township was almost an unbroken wilderness, with here and there little patches hewed out of the woods by the hardy and adventurous settler, he toiled long distances through the forest to be present at those pleasant revivals held in the shanty of the hardy pioneer. Churches there were none for several years. That peace, however, which arises from an abiding faith in the promises of a merciful heaven, was

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JOHNSTON ARMSTRONG.



found in the huts of the settlers as pure and as free as if they had worshipped under the dome of St. Paul's.

It may be said, in these sketches we are endeavoring to throw a glamor over the lives and elevate to prominence men whose characters had no distinctive features to distinguish them from the great herd of mankind. How many men have been born whose minds an empire might have swayed, and have gone leaving no trace. Fame, like fortune, is fickle, and often denies her favors to her most assiduous and persevering wooers. If brave and intrepid conduct, if energy, determination, and enterprise, if a fearless and courageous heart to surmount difficulties and inconveniences, and an abiding faith in the final results constitute the elements of greatness, very many of the old pioneers possessed these qualities in an eminent degree. Pioneer life in Canada is now, and will be forevermore, a thing of the past. New settlements there will be, but the means of communication are now so great that the privations and difficulties of sixty years ago can never reach the new settler. Railway facilities follow close in his wake, and in many instances precede his onward march, bringing to his door many of the comforts of life and the supplies necessary to the prosecution of his calling. In this township nearly the whole of the old settlers are gone, and the history of their lives are buried with them in the grave. To the wilds of western Canada they came buoyant with hope and hewed out a spot where civilization has planted her foot and laid the foundations of what will one day become a great and glorious nation. If the old adage is true that "the man who makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew before is a benefactor to

his race," then all honor to the old pioneers who transformed the pathless woods of this country into fertile fields, and made her dreary places bud and blossom like the rose.

Johnston Armstrong was born at Clewes, in the county of Fermanagh, in June, 1819. As the name indicates, the family was undoubtedly of Scottish origin. In personal appearance he was typical of a borderer. The residence of the family in the north of Ireland had not in any perceptible degree altered their appearance as being the descendants of the courageous border clan. He was rather above the middle height and well proportioned, and appeared like a person who would be able to bear a great amount of hardship. His complexion was very fair, indicating a Danish ancestry—a distinguishing characteristic of many of the Lowland people of Scotland. In manner he was grave and thoughtful, reticent rather than loquacious. He was utterly destitute of that brusque, hail-fellow well-met conduct that usually marked the old pioneer. He was somewhat clerical and dignified in his communications. In his habits he was methodical and temperate, and always acted with an apparent deliberation, as if he fully calculated the consequences of his actions. He was not demonstrative either to his friends or to his opponents, and as a matter of course he was often misunderstood. Such a character was the very opposite of that which meets the approval of the great crowd and merits the thoughtless applause of the multitude. For the course he had marked out for himself, however, it was exactly suitable. To minister at the altar, and assist in the dissemination of the principles of Methodism among the early settlers, these qualities

were essential to success. His grave and thoughtful aspect forbade all that gross familiarity which was part of the every-day life of the early settler, and gave him an influence in spiritual affairs which appeared to be the goal of his highest aspirations. From his earliest days in Blanshard he had associated himself with the Rev. Ephraim Evans (the great apostle of the church founded by John Wesley) whose voice in the township was like the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way." In the shanty Mr. Armstrong had erected on the Mitchell road in 1843, Mr. Evans was a constant visitor, and ministered to the spiritual wants of the old pioneers, some of whom came many miles through the forest to the place of meeting. These to many were happy reunions, and the glorious old songs of Zion, as they rose from the lonely hut, floated away in the distant woods like the diminished tones of a distant echo. At the close of the service, when good-byes had been spoken and the good old minister had blessed them, all took their dreary way through the woods, feeling that surely this must have been the house of God and none other than the gate of heaven.

He had joined the Orange order, but was a strong Reformer in politics.

Mr. Armstrong was the son of a farmer, and apparently one of the highest class. His manner and personal appearance indicated a careful and comfortable bringing up. The education attained in Ireland seventy years ago in the ordinary school was not of a very high order, but such as it was he received a full share. He spoke English well, and took pride in the use of the most appropriate and eloquent language to express his ideas. After leaving school he worked on the farm



till he reached the age of twenty-one years. At this age, with most of young men their natural characteristics begin to assert themselves and give tone and color to their lives. He therefore formed the design to abandon farm life in Ireland and mark out for himself a new career in the land being opened up in the west. The possibilities in Canada were much greater for a young, energetic man without much capital than they could have been in his native country. In the spring of 1840 we find him at Quebec, and preparing for further journeying on to Niagara. That terrible excitement which had almost paralyzed the progress of Upper Canada, arising out of the Rebellion of 1837, had not yet subsided. It did not take long on his arrival at Niagara to decide as to his future conduct in the struggle, the effects of which were still felt. His loyalty to the Crown and Government of Great Britain was then and continued during his life to be one of the prominent elements in his character. He accordingly joined the volunteers, clothed himself with the Queen's livery, and was prepared for any emergency in the defence of the authority of Britain. With the volunteers he served for twenty-two months, when they were disbanded, some going to their homes, and he to the then almost unbroken wilderness of the township of Blanshard. In April of 1843 he came to the woods and located on lots 7 and 8, in the East Mitchell road concession. On lot 8 he made his home for forty years. Lot 7 he afterwards sold to his brother Thomas, and on which he lived, it may almost be said, his whole life. It may be mentioned here that no two men could be more alike than the two brothers. In personal appearance, in manner, in that dignity which appears to be peculiar

to the taste of Irish people of the better class, in his actions, in his style of expressing himself in conversation, the one appears to be an almost exact counterpart of the other.

The Mitchell road concession, in 1843, was all woods, at least in the northern part of it, and Mr. Armstrong's first work was to erect a shanty in which he could live until better days should come. In this shanty he resided, and here he kept the travelling ministers, here made welcome the poor land hunter and his family as they pursued their weary journey away to some lonely spot in the forest, there to make a home, and here, in 1844, he brought his young wife. The young ladies of those days must have had leal hearts and boundless faith in those to whom they were united, when they left home and became the mistress of a rude log shanty, with its roof of troughs and clay-plastered walls.

In July, 1844, Mr. Armstrong married Miss Clarinda Sparling, daughter of C. G. Sparling, who resided on the West Mitchell road concession. Mrs. Armstrong was a good and kind woman, and assisted her husband to the utmost in his efforts to secure a home for their family. The result of their labors on the old farm, we are pleased to say, was one of success. In the course of years the old shanty disappeared and a commodious new dwelling occupied its place. Barns were built and the whole farm improved, indicative of comfort and that ease in circumstances which is sure to follow well-directed effort. There was born to Mrs. Armstrong a family of thirteen children—six sons and seven daughters—Maxwell, who died in infancy; Claudius B. D. Armstrong, of London; T. S. Armstrong, of St.

Marys ; C. G. Armstrong, of New Brunswick ; Adam Clark, died in infancy ; Johnston, died at nineteen years of age ; Mary Ann (Mrs. Reuben Shier), Blanshard ; Sarah Jane (Mrs. Byfield), dead ; Lucy (Mrs. Peane), of the township of Delaware ; Elizabeth (Mrs. Woodbridge), of London ; Clarinda (Mrs. McKay), of Manitoba ; Margaret Eleanor, dead ; and Edith, of Boston, U.S. It may seem to Mrs. Armstrong somewhat melancholy to reflect, as it will be to thousands of mothers in this land, that those whom they had around their hearths a few short years ago are all gone, and they are left alone, it may be to drop a tear as they reflect on the years that were spent in the old shanty in the woods, and which can come back no more. The hand of fate and circumstances seems to be inexorable, and families are separated far from each other, never, it may be, to meet again on this side of eternity.

As we have stated elsewhere in this sketch, Mr. Armstrong, on his arrival in Canada, had joined the volunteers and served for some time in the corps at Niagara. After settling in Blanshard he attended the military school for a period, learning the form of drill and the tactics in connection with the service. He was appointed captain in the sedentary forces in Blanshard, the militia system in vogue in Canada at that time. This position he held for several years, and with that of the office of treasurer of the municipality in 1855, were the only public offices he ever held in the township.

As we have stated elsewhere, politics never attracted Mr. Armstrong. His thought and the trend of his mind was in an entirely different groove. He had early identified himself with the Methodist body, and all his

energies were spent in the spread and support of its teachings. Previous to his marriage his shanty was open to the clergy of that denomination at all times, as well as having an open door to the poor emigrant in search of a home. He was not of those to whom the Master spoke in the market-place: "Why stand ye here idle? Go, work in my vineyard." Neither was he like him who, having received his talents, tied them in a handkerchief. The ability he had was given for a purpose, and he used it as he thought best in the cause of Him who is everlasting life to all men. He was a local preacher, recording steward, class-leader, and superintendent of the Sabbath-school. He laid the foundations of the now prosperous congregation of Zion Church on the Mitchell road. The good seed sowed fifty years ago in the old log cabin, on lot 8, has grown up abundantly, and the temple raised to the worship of God is to-day amongst the finest in the township.

His life on the farm was such as was common to all the old pioneers. After long years of labor and waiting, came success. At the end of forty years from the time he entered the woods, he was able to retire to St. Marys, where he might rest and live the balance of his allotted span in comfort. After residing some time in St. Marys he became quite infirm, and the strong constitution seemed to be giving way to the inevitable. In 1891 his infirmities were such that it was evident he could not hold out much longer, and on the 19th day of October he breathed his last. Verily it is true that "man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets. Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the

fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it."

So Mr. Armstrong had accomplished the work set apart for him to do, and if it be true, as the poet says, that "an honest man is the noblest work of God," then we say this old pioneer died an honest man.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## ST. MARYS.

IN the preceding chapters we have in our imperfect way given a record of the early settlement of the township of Blanshard, but this in itself would be incomplete without any reference being made to the town of St. Marys, which, as if under the wand of the enchanter, had sprung up sixty years ago. In the year 1843 was completed the grist mill (now owned by the Carter family), at the point where the main street of the town crosses the River Thames. This enterprise had been entered into by Mr. Ingersoll at the suggestion of the Canada Company, and for which he received a grant of a certain portion of land as a remuneration for his outlay in its construction. This convenience was of the utmost importance to the settlers, and formed the nucleus of the future town. In 1842 a saw-mill had been completed where Water Street crosses the stream, a short distance above its confluence with the river. Queen Street, east and west of the Thames, still presented to the emigrant a primitive aspect, and the ingenious hand of man had as yet made no impress on the old forest trees that still stood on that now important thoroughfare. At the corners of Queen and Water Streets the first

settlers had erected the only business places which then composed the rude hamlet, and exposed such wares for sale as would be required in a new country. In 1841 Mr. George Tracey had erected the first building of any description ever built in St. Marys. This dwelling was on what is now Church Street, and appears to have been a stage in advance of the shanty, as it contained two rooms, and had an upstairs, which was reached by a ladder constructed of two poles, between which were the rungs. Mr. John Ingersoll, son of Thomas Ingersoll, opened the first general store St. Marys, on the corner of Queen and Water Streets, in 1842. The next store was opened by Mr. Cruttenden in 1843, and the first dram was sold by William Carroll in a log shanty on Water Street, opposite the saw-mill. The influx of settlers and the rapid improvement of the Township of Blanshard created a great demand for the class of goods required in new settlements, and the hamlet in the valley of the Thames made great progress. Millner Harrison, who was a man of strong and robust frame and overpowering energy, had arrived, and entered into projects which by his prudence and foresight led to a fortune. T. B. Guest had also become a citizen. James McKay was early on the scene, and assisted, in 1841, to prepare the site for the new saw-mill. Amongst the old pioneer business men who had located in the town, besides those already mentioned, we find the Messrs. Hutton, Whelihan, Moscrip, Barron, Flawse, McCuaig, McDonald, and Dunn. Mr. Long, the present respected treasurer of the town, is also one of the old pioneers of St. Marys, and succeeded Mr. Steel, of Brantford,

whose manager he had been in the St. Marys business. Mr. Long carried on his store in a long, low building extending from the corner on Queen Street back along Water Street, and on which spot is now the large stone structure occupied by John Woods. He did a large business with the new settlers in the township, and divided with Mr. Harrison the trade in potash, which was then the only article of merchandise produced on the farm for which money could readily be obtained.

In 1843, when Mr. Cruttenden arrived, came also Mr. Nicholas Rogers, who began teaching the first school ever opened in St. Marys. Mr. Rogers is still hale and hearty, and he seems to recall vividly many of the events that occurred in the woods nearly sixty years ago. At that time no building had been erected in the town where the young idea could be trained, and the old pioneer teacher taught the little school in his own house. Of the appliances used at the present day to train the young mind Mr. Rogers had none. History is not silent, however, regarding his school management, as it avers that while he was a good-hearted man he was inexorable in the enforcement of his scholastic regulations, even to the most liberal and rigorous application of the taws for any infringement.

Previous to the year 1845 the town was known by the name of Little Falls. In this year Mr. Commissioner Jones, of the Canada Company, with his wife, was visiting Little Falls on business in connection with the Company. The honor of giving a more appropriate name to the little village was given to Mrs. Jones. She called it St. Marys, her own Christian



name being Mary. In recognition of the honor conferred on her on that occasion she made a gift of ten pounds to the town for the purpose of erecting a school building. Thus originated the little stone school-house at the top of the hill on Queen Street, the first building of its kind in St. Marys.

In 1847 was opened the St. Marys post office, with Thomas Christie as post-master. Previous to this period the mails for the new settlement were brought from Embro or Beachville. In those days, however, carrying of mail matter was not of much importance. The places of business were but few, and those not of a very extensive order, in the township of Blanshard. As the population began to increase rapidly by the influx of new settlers, a post office was eventually opened for the accommodation of the people. This office was located on Water Street, very near its present site, where, with the exception of a short period when it was removed to Queen Street, it has ever since remained. Mr. Christie, the first post-master, was succeeded by Arundle Hill, Mr. Hill by Peter Nicol, and he by the present official, Colonel H. A. L. White.

In the middle of November, 1859, about ten o'clock on a dark, rainy night, the writer stepped from the train at the old station. Three other travellers alighted at the same time, apparently strangers, as he was himself. No town was to be seen, and in the darkness none of us knew in which direction to turn to find St. Marys. In our dilemma we were approached by a gentleman clad in a great water-proof coat, from the tails of which, as also from his hat, the water was dripping to the ground. He carried in his

hand a lantern, at the bottom of which a piece of tallow candle emitted a feeble light that seemed only to render more perceptible the surrounding darkness. The conductor had given the last call of "All aboard," and the train started for London, for as yet the road to Sarnia was not open for traffic. At last the lantern with the tallow dip reached us, and the gentleman who carried it asked if we were going to town. On being answered in the affirmative, he took the place of leader of the party, we following the light in true Indian style. On stepping from the platform we entered a sea of mud through which we plodded after our leader till we reached the Empire Hotel, on the corner of Queen and Wellington Streets, on which spot now stands the brick block of Mr. Box. This man was James McKay, one of the old time pioneers of Blanshard.

St. Marys at this time contained very few good buildings. Of the private residences, the largest and most pretentious was the house of Mr. Tracey, now owned by Mr. Weir. The surroundings of this dwelling, now one beautiful mass of foliage in the summer months, were then naked and bare. On Queen Street, then as now the principal commercial centre of the town, few good buildings had as yet been erected. The stone block extending from the corner of Water Street to the bridge was built. The Guest Block, on the south side of Queen and west of Wellington Street, the stone building which has been long occupied by A. Beattie & Company, at the corner of the Market Square; the stone building occupied by Mr. White as a general store;—these, with the old National Hotel, were nearly all the substantial business places

on Queen Street. True, both sides of this thoroughfare were as closely built then as they are to-day, but it had not the imposing appearance it now presents. With the exception of the places we have mentioned, the structures were all frame, a few of which still remain. The Central School was the only public building in St. Marys in 1859 which exists at present and which was at all worthy of the town. Previous to 1859 there had been erected a rookery which was dignified by the name of the Market Building, and which through some merciful interposition of Providence was destroyed by fire some years ago. On this spot, after its purification, was erected the splendid municipal building which is an ornament to St. Marys as well as a testimony to the taste and public spirit of those gentlemen who controlled the municipal destinies of the town at that particular period.

In every Christian country temples have been raised for the worship of the Most High in the decorations and architectural designs of which, in many lands, have been displayed the most matchless conceptions of the human mind and the most splendid operations of human hands. In her churches St. Marys equals if she does not surpass any other place of her size in Canada. It was long before she rose to her dignity in this respect, however. The churches in the town, for many years after better things might have been expected, were not creditable to a place of such importance. But the trust has been amply redeemed, and the churches of all the denominations to-day are indicative of a high appreciation by the people of the fact that altars erected to the worship of God should be worthy of Him from whom all blessings flow.

In the matter of education the citizens have always been fully alive to its advantages. They have not been niggardly in making every provision for the training of their children. In 1875 was erected the Collegiate Institute. The town has spared no expense in its equipment, and to-day it is fully abreast with the great movement of higher education. Under the able management of the principal, Mr. Martin, and those associated with him, the school has attained to a wide celebrity. There is perhaps no other school in the province, and no section of surrounding country, which have given, not to Canada only, but to the world, a greater number of distinguished characters. From Blanshard we have William Dale, once a professor in the University of Toronto; William Stevens, now of New Zealand, who was awarded the University Medal presented by the Marquis of Lorne, Governor-General of Canada; George Somerville, manager of the largest financial concern in the City of London; C. Clarkson, who obtained honors at the University, now High School teacher; Mr. J. McVannel, Professor in Columbia University, United States; Arthur Beatty, Professor in Madison, Wisconsin, and many others who have won enviable distinction.

From St. Marys we have two individuals whose names stand out clear and prominent above all others—Miss Norah Clinch, the greatest violinist in the world; and Mrs. Charlton Black, nee Agnes Knox, whose name and fame extend from one end of this country to the other. It is a proud distinction which crowns the St. Marys Collegiate Institute, that in its class-rooms these great characters received their

early training. We are pleased to give in our own humble way our testimony to the work done in this seminary, and to acknowledge our pride in these men and women who have distinguished themselves, and who look back to Blanshard as the place of their nativity.

And here we will conclude this sketch of Blanshard and its old settlers with the hope that we may have rescued from oblivion some incident in connection with pioneer life which by the future historian of this country may not be thought unworthy of recital to a generation yet afar off. To the memory, therefore, of those who have left us, and to those of their descendants who are here, we bring this our humble offering—

THE PIONEERS OF BLANSHARD.

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